The Influence of Liturgy on English Medieval Shepherds' Plays and the Castilian Pastoral Drama before Lope de Vega

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Tesis Doctoral

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Abbreviations

AEDEAN	Asociación Española de Estudios Anglo-Norteamericanos
ca.	Circa.
CUP	Cambridge University Press.
DNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.
DRAE	Diccionario General de la Lengua Española.
ed.	Editor.
eds.	Editors.
EETS	The Early English Text Society.
ff	Following.
fn	Footnote.
IMC	International Medieval Congress.
l.	Line.
ll.	Lines.
OED	Oxford English Dictionary.
OUP	Oxford University Press.
REED	Records of Early English Drama.
SELIM	Sociedad Española de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa Medieval.
SITM	Société Internationale pour l'étude du Théâtre Médiéval. (International Society for the Study of Medieval Theater).
Trans.	Translation.
UTP	University of Toronto Press.
vol.	Volume.
vols.	Volumes.

A Note on Texts and Translations

All allusions, quotations and references to texts come from the following editions unless otherwise indicated; full citations may be found in the Works Cited:

ENGLISH PLAYS

The Towneley Plays: *The First Shepherds' Play* and *The Second Shepherds' Play*, eds. Martin Stevens and A. C. Cawley.

The Chester Plays: *The Painters' Playe*, eds. R. M. Lumiansky and David Mills.

The N-Town Play: *Play 16*, ed. Stephen Spector.

The York Play: The Chandlers' Play, ed. Richard Beadle.

The Coventry Plays: The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors, eds. Pamela M. King and Clifford Davidson.

Shrewsbury Fragments: *Officium Pastorum*, ed. Norman David

SPANISH PLAYS

Coplas de "Vita Christi", ed. *Cervantes Virtual*.

La Representación del Nasçimiento de Nuestro Señor, ed. *Cervantes Virtual*.

Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad, ed. *Cervantes Virtual*.

Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias, ed. *Cervantes Virtual*.

Farsas y Églogas al Modo y Estilo Pastoril y Castellano: Égloga o Farsa del Nascimiento de Nuestro Redemptor Jesucristo and *Auto o Farsa del Nascimiento de Nuestro Señor Iesu Christo*, ed. Juan Miguel Valero Moreno.

Égloga Nuevamente Trovada por Hernando de Yanguas en Loor de la Natividad de Nuestro Señor, ed. *Cervantes Virtual*.

Liturgical Material

Missale Romanum, 28th ed.
Breviarium Romanum, ed. F. Pustet.

Except where indicated, Latin biblical references, including the numbering of psalms, are from the *Vulgate*, and translations come from *The King James Bible*. Translations from the liturgical texts both from the Missal and from the Breviary into English are from *Divinum Officium*, ed. László Kiss. All translations from Spanish and other languages into English are by the author.

As for the formal style, the 2013 MLA style sheet has been followed on a general basis, although for convenience's sake, the author has tried to make the style as reader friendly as possible.

Introduction

Medieval drama is an exciting field of research for several reasons. First of all, because it presents more puzzling questions than clear answers, since little is known about authors, methods of performance, or places where plays were staged. Secondly, the Middle Ages is too long a period of time, which has rendered however a relatively low amount of dramatic texts. Furthermore, works are usually preserved in hybrid assemblies of dramatic or quasi-dramatic material which is not easy to classify, and the extant haphazard records that may shed some light upon them are often non-specific. These may be some of the reasons why the study of medieval drama has not deserved in the recent past as wide an attention as the English Elizabethan-Jacobean theater or the Spanish Golden Age "comedias."

The scope of this study is a time period that covers from approximately the 15th to the mid-16th century, although some of the works under analysis survive in copies that were written down or compiled much later. The boundaries that have been created between terms such as medieval or Renaissance have been set to facilitate scholarly study. In fact, the temporal framework embraces such periods as Middle English, Late Medieval, Early-Renaissance, Tudor, Pre-Lope de Vega and Renaissance. To make references less troubling, the terms medieval for both the English dramas and some of the Castilian pieces, and Pre-Lope de Vega for the rest of Spanish

works have been used as a useful strategy in an attempt at dislodging the barriers that such periodization creates.

There are multiple reasons to write about the English and Castilian religious shepherds' dramas comprised within the aforementioned boundaries. The first one is personal, and is based on an acting experience. The author of this work was lucky enough to undertake, as an undergraduate student, several roles in a Nativity drama called *Puer Natus* made up from fragments compiled from the *Vulgate*, the English biblical plays, and some Castilian pieces. The central scene was an adaptation of *The Chester Painters' Playe*, which deals with the Annunciation to the Shepherds. That amateur production, devised and directed by Professor Portillo García was first staged in Seville in 2000 and then taken to the Corral de Comedias de Almagro in the same year. It was also enacted at the University of Groningen (Holland) on the occasion of the 10th SITM Triennial Colloquium in 2001. It was then that medieval drama aroused a personal interest as a discipline, since the medieval Nativity plays and, particularly, those episodes dealing with shepherds, revealed themselves in their great dramatic potential.

The present study began later when, as a graduate student, various specific PhD courses on medieval drama and the early modern period were selected. The final research project for these courses was in fact a catalogue of the extant medieval religious shepherds' plays from England and the rest of Europe. It was not an easy task, as the endeavor entailed many challenges which were overwhelming for a young researcher. First

of all, even if access to the English texts—most of which had been edited by the EETS—was quite straightforward and they were available at the Departmental Library in Seville, other plays were not so easy to locate. Nevertheless, some of those texts were finally spotted while researching at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, although the linguistic barriers were great and the interpretation of particularly the French and German play-texts caused real problems, in spite of the fact that help was requested and actually supplied by specialists in the field.

The author's participation at the 12th SITM Colloquium held in Lille in 2007 (France), was undoubtedly a turning point, as it provided firsthand information on the study of medieval drama and state-of-the-art research techniques from first-rate scholars. The invaluable help and guidance provided by many of the SITM members during and after the conference, and the attendance at the 13th Colloquium held in Gießen (Germany) in 2010 were crucial to accomplish this project. Various versions of the material presented in this study have actually been subjected to the scrutiny of those scholars and have been presented as papers at those two colloquiums, as well as at the IMC celebrated yearly in Leeds, U. K., or in other national conferences such as the AEDEAN or SELIM.

A final decision was taken to narrow down the corpus of Medieval English shepherds' plays and to establish a comparative approach with the Castilian dramas on the same subject matter. Thus, the corpus of the present study comprises seven late Middle English play-texts. Two of them are contained within *The Towneley Plays*, namely, *The First Shepherds' Play*

and *The Second Shepherds' Play*. The other pieces are *The Painters' Playe* from the *The Chester Plays*, *Play 16* from *The N-Town Play*, *The Chandlers' Play* from *The York Plays*, and *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*. A "non-cycle play," has been considered as well, namely, the so-called *Officium Pastorum* from The *Shrewsbury Fragments*.

Seven Castilian plays have been selected. The first one is the shepherds' dramatic dialogue contained in Fray Íñigo de Mendoza's *Coplas de "Vita Christi"* (*coplas* 122-58). The second one is Gómez Manrique's *La Representación del Nasçimiento de Nuestro Señor*. The next two plays are by Juan del Enzina, namely, *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad* which belongs to *Cancionero de las Obras de Juan del Enzina*, and *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, which was published in his *Cancionero de Todas las Obras de Juan del Enzina con Otras Cosas Nueuamente Añadidas*. Two other plays by Lucas Fernández have been considered as well, both of them published in his anthology *Farsas y Églogas al Modo y Estilo Pastoril y Castellano: Égloga o Farsa del Nascimiento de Nuestro Redemptor Jesucristo* and *Auto o Farsa del Nascimiento de Nuestro Señor Iesu Christo*. The last Castilian play in the corpus is Hernán López de Yanguas's piece *Égloga Nuevamente Trovada por Hernando de Yanguas en Loor de la Natividad de Nuestro Señor.*

All English medieval dramas including shepherds have been the subject of many relevant serious scientific books, articles and papers. Most of the extant texts have been edited and published by the Early English Text Society (EETS) while the stage practice in England has been under-

taken by an important group of scholars who gather together around the REED project. As for the literary criticism about medieval drama, the works of several scholars and professors, among them Woolf, King, Twycross, Happé, Rastall, Beadle, Lumiansky, Mills, Stevens, Cawley, Epp, etc., ought to be mentioned. However, medieval English drama has been mostly studied as if it were an independent corpus, somehow isolated and different from plays that may have been produced at the same time in other parts of Europe. It is significant that in spite of the efforts of the SITM, that meets every three years, little effort has been made to set the English medieval plays in a European context. In that sense it is no coincidence that one of the most relevant journals dealing with medieval drama bears the title *Medieval English Theatre*, which has been active since 1979.

On the other hand, Castilian medieval drama has been the subject of much less attention, owing perhaps to its comparatively small corpus and the lack of evidence regarding its circumstances of performance. Although the most significant dramatic texts have been edited over the past three decades, a definite, complete critical edition of all extant texts remains yet to be undertaken. The number of serious critical works on these dramas is not very large, but studies by Surtz, Stern, Pérez-Priego, López Morales, and Salvador Miguel deserve to be mentioned. The same thing applies to Pre-Lope de Vega drama, although significant scholarly effort has been undertaken by Maurizi, Álvarez Pellitero, Bonilla y San Martín, González Ollé, etc. No attempts whatsoever on the part of Spanish theater histo-

rians have yet been made to compare Castilian medieval drama and the medieval theater produced in other European countries.

The present study undertakes a comparative analysis of both medieval English and Castilian drama for the first time. Its main goal is to prove that the medieval dramas produced or performed in England and Castile in the late Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance dealing with the Annunciation to the Shepherds share a set of common features that may help explain the origin and development of those works and the circumstances of their composition. Similar plays that enact other episodes in the life of Jesus rely heavily on meditative texts and on the Apocrypha. No such influences have been traced in the pastoral plays and, in fact, no apocryphal accounts of the Annunciation to the shepherds are known. Therefore, this research is based on the assumption that apart from Luke's Gospel, the only common source for the composers of medieval European shepherds' plays must have been the liturgical texts of the late medieval Church.

In this dissertation, a purely liturgical approach has been attempted for the first time. Since all the plays analyzed deal with the Nativity, the liturgical services for the Christmas season were first approached. However, since most of the pieces studied include a series of episodes that take place prior to the Birth of Christ, the services related to the Advent season had to be considered as well. On the other hand, the liturgy of the Christian Church has always relied on two basic pillars, namely, the Missal and

the Breviary, both of which were taken into account when studying the different works.

However, medieval liturgy presents a serious challenge. To begin with, there was no prescribed missal or breviary common to all countries prior to the Council of Trent (1545–1563). Each ecclesiastical province and virtually every diocese had its local use, as for instance in England, the Use of Sarum, the Use of York and the Use of Hereford. For the purpose of the present study the breviaries and missals from Sarum and York have been consulted.[1] From the Iberian Peninsula, the Santiago de Compostela *Missale Auriense* and *Breviarium Auriense*, and the *Missale Mixtum Toletanum* from Toledo have been taken into account.[2] Also, pre-Tridentine monastic liturgical books have been analyzed.[3] They are all medieval pre-Tridentine texts and bear a great similarity with the liturgical texts prescribed by the Council of Trent.

In order to confront this challenge, assistance was requested from the Seville School of Theology (Centro de Estudios Teológicos de Sevilla) and it was only then that the Tridentine Missal and Breviary were chosen as

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1 For the Sarum books, refer to Francis Procter and Christopher Wordsworth,eds. *Breviarium ad Usum Insignis Ecclesiae Sarum*; F. H. Dickson, ed. *Missale ad Usum Insignis et Praeclara Ecclesia Sarum*; J. Whickham M. Legg, ed. *The Sarum Missal. Edited from Three Early Manuscripts*. As regards York, see William George Henderson, ed. *Missale ad Usum Insignis Ecclesiae Eboracensis* and Stephen Willoughby Lawley, ed. *Breviarium ad Usum Insignis Ecclesie Eboracensis*.

2 For the texts and further information on the Pre-Tridentine Castilian liturgical books, see Ignacio Cabano Vázquez and Xosé M. Díaz Fernández, eds. *Breviario Auriense, o Incunable de 1485-1490* and *Missale Auriense*; Juan Manuel Sierra López, ed. *El Misal Toledano de 1499*.

3 On the pre-Tridentine monastic liturgical books, see Laszlo Kiss, ed. *Divinum Officium*.

useful methodological tools to analyze the influence of liturgy on the composition of the plays. Several specialists from the aforementioned institution confirmed that variations would have mostly affected the practice of local feasts. Actually, it should be noted that while the Tridentine Missal was codified at the Council of Trent, it was somehow in use at least from the times of St Gregory the Great (ca. 540-604). It is true that throughout the Middle Ages, numerous local varieties of the Roman Rite appeared, such as the Mozarabic Rite in Castile. However, as the Catholic Encyclopedia points out:

> [...] These medieval rites (Paris, Rouen, Trier, Sarum, and so on all over Western Europe) are simply exuberant local modifications of the old Roman rite. The same applies to the particular uses of various religious orders (Carthusians, Dominicans, Carmelites etc.). None of these deserves to be called even a derived rite; their changes are only ornate additions and amplifications ("Liturgy of the Mass").

One of the goals of the Council of Trent was actually to produce a definite and common missal, thus superseding all particular uses or variations. The same would apply to the Roman Breviary (Fábregas, Fernández, and Olivar 173-89), that is, the Catholic book that contains the Divine Office or set of daily prayers recited at the Canonical Hours. These are also known as the Liturgy of the Hours, and are recited daily by the members of the different orders.[4] The Office contains psalms, collects and lessons but also readings from the Bible and on the lives of the Saints.

[4] See Appendix III.

The English texts were used as a starting point to select the Castilian ones, regarding as their main link the fact they all enact Luke's account of the Annunciation and Adoration of the Shepherds (Luke 2:8-20). A number of Castilian pastoral plays were discarded simply because they do not dramatize Luke's narrative. In fact, they are merely religious pastoral pieces whose characters do not stand for the Nativity shepherds, even if Christmas is alluded to in the course of the plays. Thus, in those discarded plays, shepherds normally show their awareness of the Christmas period and meditate upon this crucial event. They even discuss the matter in a doctrinal way, thus showing some similarities to morality plays. For instance, Diego Sánchez de Badajoz's (ca. 1525-1549) *Farsa Theologal*, included in his *Recopilación en Metro* published posthumously in 1554 was discarded for this reason. The preamble to Sánchez de Badajoz's work points out that in the play, "principalmente se tratan algunas razones de la Encarnación y Natividad de Nuestro Señor Jesuchristo" (it chiefly deals with some reasons concerning the Incarnation and Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ). It also mentions the speakers of such discussion: "Pastor que pregunta y un Theólogo que responde, y una Negra, y un Soldado, y un Maestro de sacar muelas y un Cura" [5] (a shepherd who asks, and a theologian who responds, a black woman, and a soldier, and a dentist and a priest). It is obvious then that it does not follow the English and Castilian Nativity pattern; it is simply a farce in which a theological discussion on the Nativity is embedded.

[5] Quoted from Miguel Ángel Pérez-Priego, *Diego Sánchez de Badajoz* 81.

Two other plays that were rejected were Bartolomé Torres Naharro's *Diálogo de la Natividad* (1505) and *Adición al Diálogo* (1507). As Crawford indicates "the author aims to commemorate rather than to represent the Nativity" (84). The characters are actually aware that it is Christmas Eve as they are on a pilgrimage to Rome, and they mention that the Nativity had taken place many years earlier. In *Adición al Diálogo*, one of the characters comments: "Yo no digo que oy nasció, | mas otra noche como ésta"[6] (I'm not saying that He was born today, | But on another night like this one). The case of Enzina's *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad* is particularly curious for, as explained in Chapter 2, in spite of its title, it is not a Nativity drama and it only seeks the Duke of Alba's patronage.

Both in the English and Castilian pieces, authors often felt free to add a series of extra scenes that are not found in the succinct biblical text or in the Apocrypha. Thus, a group of shepherds feature in all the English dramas. They, after receiving the news of Christ's Birth delivered by various celestial beings, undertake a trip to Bethlehem and worship the newborn at the Manger. There are basically two models in the English plays. A first model would include those pieces in which the playwrights have added an extra part prior to the angelic announcement. Those plays are *The First Shepherds' Play* and *The Second Shepherds' Play* from *Towneley*, and *The Chester Painters' Playe*. That extra part seems to have evolved from the domain of fabliaux and farces, and therefore its characters tend to be some-

[6] Quoted from Gillet 286.

what clownish. After the angel's news, the Nativity episode proper takes place, and characters undergo an enlightenment process, after which they go worship the Christ-Child. The shepherds all seem to possess a dual nature, for when the play opens they stand for local, contemporary herdsmen, as their speech, references to daily routines, and use of toponyms seem to indicate; towards the end of the play, however, they turn into the biblical characters of Luke's Gospel narrative, even if, as will be seen below, they retain some of their local characteristics.

A second model would comprise *The York Chandlers' Play*, *Play 16* from *The N-Town Play* and *The Shrewsbury Officium Pastorum*. *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*, as will be seen below, presents characteristics from the two groups. The plays from this second group are less complex, more reserved in tone, as the shepherds do not actually show, in general terms, the same farcical and clownish traits. However, these shepherds also share with their first group counterparts their rusticity, as may be ascertained from their speeches. The plays from the second group open with the news of the Birth, but the shepherds do not undergo the same transformation process as in the first group for reasons that are discussed below. The final part of these dramas, as it also happens in the first model, concerns the shepherds' encounter with Baby Jesus at the Manger. The majority of Castilian plays seem to ascribe to the first English model, and so they add an extra scene, alien to the Gospel narrative. Only Gómez Manrique's and López de Yanguas's works open with the news of the Birth.

The texts of all Nativity shepherds' plays have been analyzed in great detail and have been studied in the light of the liturgy for the Advent and Christmas seasons. Therefore, a close reading of the dramatic and the liturgical texts has been necessary. The influence of liturgy has revealed itself to be of paramount importance when approaching the dramatic works from a comparative angle. All texts, however, have proved to share a series of characteristic features that are not necessarily linked to the liturgical practice. In that case, those elements have also been taken into consideration. Apart from such primary sources as the Missal and the Breviary, many secondary critical and historical works have been employed to support each statement. All bibliographical references are indicated both in footnotes and at the Works Cited section.

The present dissertation consists of seven chapters. The first one is devoted to the corpus of medieval English drama and sets the English shepherds' plays in their medieval and theater contexts. An updated view, that breaks away from other traditional standpoints concerning English theater and drama, and provides a modern scholarly approach, is offered. The chapter lays emphasis on extant manuscripts and their history, and also takes into account lost texts. In addition, a section provides historical information regarding the prohibition and suppression of religious plays in England.

Similarly, Chapter 2 analyzes the brief corpus of Castilian medieval plays. Then, it moves on to examine the dramatic practices common in Castile in the late 15th and early 16th century to contextualize the plays

included in this study. The amount of dramatic texts produced in that period is considerably high, but it goes beyond the scope of this work, as this dissertation does not pretend to reconstruct the corpus of Pre-Lope de Vega drama in its entirety. Therefore, the chapter provides pertinent information based on the available facts about authors and plays. It also tries to shed some light upon the labels ascribed to Castilian plays, such as "auto," "farsa" and "égloga."

The next chapter concerns the nature of rite, liturgy and drama in the Middle Ages. It first considers the liturgical tropes and the traditional view held by many scholars who had envisaged them as making up the drama of the medieval Church. The particular case of the *Officium Pastorum* trope and its status as the rightful ancestor of the secular shepherds' dramas are both addressed. The question of the influence of liturgy on drama and whether or not this phenomenon is common to medieval plays concerns the final section of this chapter, in an attempt at introducing the liturgical analysis of the plays.

The fourth chapter focuses upon the role of food, drink and presents in the English and Castilian plays. The food items that the characters mention are compared in both traditions and are analyzed in the light of the Advent liturgical prescriptions on fasting and almsgiving. A final section is devoted to the shepherds' failure to understand the divine message concerning Jesus's Birth, and it addresses a series of innovative liturgical interpretations.

Chapter 5 deals with the recurrence of light and darkness images in the dialogues of these dramas. Special emphasis is laid on the role of negative weather conditions. An analysis of the imagery present in the liturgical texts for Advent and Christmas services is provided and links are established.

The sixth chapter approaches the speeches that dwell on messianic prophecies and typological references. In addition, close attention is paid to the characters' comments about Jesus's lineage. A concluding section on the shepherds' awareness of their own family ancestry is provided.

A final chapter examines the role of sound, music and song in the English and Castilian plays and widens the scope to some other European works on the same subject matter. The specific songs and the musical terminology used by characters are studied. The role of the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* hymn is analyzed. As in the previous chapters, a liturgical interpretation of both the musical and the muted parts of the dramas is provided.

After the Conclusion, and before the Works Cited section, three appendixes have been inserted: one describes the basic structure of the Advent and Christmas liturgical periods, reflecting the main days and feasts; the second one concerns the structure of the Tridentine Mass, whereas the third one is devoted to the Divine Office or Canonical Hours, as used in the Roman Breviary.

Chapter 1
The English Plays

1.1 English Medieval Drama

The traditional categorization of English medieval drama relies on a dual model based exclusively on the extant pre-Reformation texts (King, *The York Mystery Cycle* 1-5).[7] There are therefore two types of plays; on the one hand, that which conveys a didactic catechetical message, that most critics would refer to as a "morality" or a "moral play;" on the other hand, the one that dramatizes a narrative taken from the Bible and/or the Apocrypha, which has been traditionally regarded as a"mystery," "pageant," "biblical play" or even a "miracle." Various authors have also referred to this second type of drama as a "Corpus Christi play." Since critics and theater historians used to believe that most important English towns possessed in the Middle Ages a "cycle" of "mysteries" that were performed annually on special occasion, the label "cycle play" came into being and was popular for some time.

A third distinction is actually made by scholars such as Davidson and Brockett, who include the so-called "saint play."[8] This genre shares with

[7] For a recent taxonomy of English Drama see Meg Twycross. "Medieval English Theatre: Codes and Genres." Ed. Peter Brown. *The Blackwell Companion to Medieval English Literature and Culture ca. 1350-ca. 1500*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006. 455-72.

[8] Clifford Davidson and Clyde Waring Brockett. *The Saint Play in Medieval Europe*. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications (Western Michigan University), 1986.

the morality a common didactic and devotional focus. Both the morality and the saint play tend to use allegory and allegorical characters.

Potter, in his well-known work *The English Morality Play*, precisely describes what these allegorical dramas aimed at depicting:

> A concept–what it means to be human–is represented on stage by a central dramatic figure or series of figures. Subsidiary characters, defined by their function, stand at the service of the plot, which is ritualized, dialectical, and inevitable: man exists, therefore he falls, nevertheless he is saved. This pattern, repeated in every morality play, should enable us not only to understand the form but also to fix its place in the unity of medieval religious drama (6-7).

Moralities have been called the "drama of moral instruction" (Richardson & Johnston 98). The plays covered human life in abstract terms, and usually told the pilgrimage of the allegorical hero, Mankind or Humanum Genus, in which he comes across a number of vices and virtues such as ignorance, humility, and the seven deadly sins, which try to control his soul. The constant choice between good and evil, the ephemeral nature of life, and the proximity of death are among the most common themes; all of them reflect, in fact, the medieval concern with the conflict between the spirit and the flesh (Truslller 47). Semi-professional actors were in charge of their mise-en-scène. The performances were usually short, and their somber themes were treated by means of farcical elements (Gómez Moreno 81). One of the earliest moralities in England is *The Castell of Perseverance* (ca.1405-1425), which includes the staging plan, a circular platea with a central castle. Two other well-known examples of the genre are the 15th

century *Everyman*, probably an English version of the Dutch *Elckerlijc*, and *Mankind* (ca. 1470).[9]

Saint plays are accounts of saints' lives based on legendary sources, with elements from the morality plays (Trusller 43-46). In Britain, a Cornish play about St Meriasek has been preserved[10] and two English dramas about Mary Magdalene and St Paul, respectively, both in the same manuscript (MS Digby 133).[11] The English *Croxton Play of the Sacrament* (ca. 1461) is a unique work although it bears some resemblances with saints' plays. Its purpose was the promulgation of the doctrine of Transubstantiation and was apparently performed with special effects.[12]

This dissertation, however, is only concerned with the second type of medieval plays, that is to say, the so-called "mysteries," "pageants," or "Corpus Christi plays" which in the present study are mostly referred to as "biblical plays." As indicated above, they are of a narrative nature, mostly dramatize biblical events and possess realistic characters. Most of

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[9] See Donald C. Baker. "The Date of Mankind." *Philological Quarterly* 42 (1963): 90-91.

[10] See for instance Markham Harris. *The Life of Meriasek. A Medieval Cornish Miracle Play*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1977.

[11] The Conversion of St Paul and Mary Magdalene are the only extant representatives of the saint play; the manuscript also includes a play known as *The Killing of the Children* similar to the ones found on the Slaughter of the Innocents in the cycle plays, and *Wisdom*, which is a morality play. Three of the dramatic texts survive as single, unique copies, except for *Wisdom*, which is also found in the East Anglian dramatic anthology known as the *Macro Manuscript*. On the Digby manuscript see Donald C. Baker, John L. Murphy, and Louis B. Hall, Jr., eds. *The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian Mss Digby 133 and E. Museo 160*. London: EETS (OUP), 1982. On *The Macro Plays* see Mark Eccles, ed. *The Macro Plays: The Castle of Perseverance, Wisdom, Mankind*. London: EETS (OUP), 1969.

[12] For further information see Elisabeth Dutton. "The Croxton Play of the Sacrament." Eds. Thomas Betteridge and Greg Walker. *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Drama*. Oxford: OUP, 2012.

these plays have been collected in four manuscript books which for many years were believed to have contained theater cycles; hence the category "cycle play."

There have been great developments in the research and study of biblical plays over the past few decades and, as King puts it, "this simple convergent model has come under increasing pressure" (King, *The York Mystery Cycle* 1) after the discovery and study of numerous theatrical texts that have been revealed by the Records of Early English Drama (REED) project, an international scholarly organization whose aim is to locate, transcribe, and edit historical documents containing evidence of drama, secular music and other communal entertainment and ceremonies from the Middle Ages until 1642.[13] These newly discovered texts may not be described according to the aforementioned traditional categories, but have helped to approach the cycle plays from different perspectives.[14]

Thus, the four English mystery cycles are now understood as being distinct among themselves in spite of their superficial similarities. For example, the so-called *N-Town Plays*, which are now considered a collection or even an anthology, as Normington sustains (40), were performed very

[13] Apart from the twenty-seven collections of records in print, REED is building a dynamic collection of freely available digital resources for research and education. For a detailed information on the project, see Caroline Barron et al. *Records of Early English Drama*. 2014. *Reed.utoronto.ca*. Web.

[14] For a recent re-examination of medieval drama see Penny Granger. *The N-Town Play: Drama and Liturgy in Medieval East Anglia*. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2009. 4-35.

differently from the rest of civic cycles.[15] As regards the *Towneley Plays*, its status as a cycle allegedly performed as a grand scale spectacle has been called into question recently by scholars such as Epp, after re-examination and analysis of manuscript ("Corected & not playd" 38-53).[16] *The Chester Plays*, even if its nature as a civil cycle is generally accepted, has also been subjected to scrutiny by scholars such as Mills[17] or Palmer.[18] As a matter of fact, the extant texts were recorded after the Reformation, which began in 1534. The plays were performed at Whitsun from 1521 till Midsummer in 1575. Therefore, the regulations for its enactment must have been extremely different from those applying to other plays in the pre-Reformation period.

1.2 The English Biblical Plays: The Manuscripts and their History

1.2.1 The Lost Texts

Very few texts have survived from the English Middle Ages when compared particularly to the French tradition. The external evidence gathered and edited by the REED project has shown that far more works have been lost than have survived. Many religious plays that were written and performed by religious guilds, parishes and towns in the pre-Reformation

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[15] On the actual and conceptual circumstances of performance of the plays, see Katie Normington. *Medieval English Drama: Performance and Spectatorship*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009. 172-96.

[16] See also Garret Epp. "The Towneley Plays and Hazards of *Cycling in Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 32 (1993): 121-50.

[17] See David Mills. *Recycling the Cycle: The City of Chester and its Whitsun Plays*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

[18] Barbara D. Palmer. "'Towneley Plays' or 'Wakefield Cycle' Revisited." *Comparative Drama* (1987): 318-348. Print.

period did not survive due to a complex series of motivations, namely, Protestant initiatives and the fear of being charged with sedition if found in possession of Catholic writings.

Records of lost pageant cycles in several English cities have been preserved. That is the case of the pageant cycle that existed in Norwich; unfortunately, of the twelve pageants depicting from Creation to Pentecost, only the text about the Fall of Man survives in an 18th century copy. In this sense, after *The Coventry Plays*, the Norwich pageant cycle would have been the shortest of all English works. In addition, a list of pageants from sometime between 1427-1430 survives; from 1527, a document from one of the guilds, the "Gilde of Saynt Luke" also evidences the existence of a lost drama. The document is a request to the local authorities of Norwich to "[...] enacte, ordeyn, and establisshe [...] vppon the Mondaye in Pentecost weke sette forth on pageant" (quoted in Galloway xxvii-xxviii). Unfortunately, of the thirty-six pageants from a Creation to Doomsday sequence from Beverley, none survives (Kinane and Ryan 87). The only records mention that in 1452 the Porters and Creelers were in charge of putting up the show as it had been done earlier in 1411.[19]

Similarly, of the twenty pageants depicting Creation to some point after the Death of the Virgin from Newcastle, just the Noah text survives in a corrupted 18th century printed version titled "Noah's Ark; or The Shipwrights ancient Play or Dirge" (Davis, *Non-Cycle Plays* xl). The oldest

[19] For further information on the records from Beverley refer to Norman Davis, ed. *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments*. "Introduction." London: EETS (OUP), 1970.

reference to the play (which is referred to as a "Chorpus Christi play") is by the Shipwrights' guild and dates back to 1427 (Anderson 3).

Likewise, of the ten apparently civic pageants from Coventry, possibly a New Testament sequence or a Creed Play[20] only two survive: the *Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* (included in this study), which covers the Nativity story from the Annunciation to the Massacre of the Innocents, and *The Weavers' Pageant* which follows on with the Purification of the Virgin Mary, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, and a sequence dealing with Christ and the Doctors. The *Weavers' Pageant* has been preserved in two manuscripts, Coventry City Record Office Accessions 11/1 and 11/2 prepared for the guild in 1534 by Robert Croo (Ingram 3). The earliest evidence of the Coventry Cycle dates back to 1345, and the last time the performance was enacted was in 1579 (King and Davidson 57). The manuscript of the *Shearmen and Taylors* burned in 1879 at the Birmingham Free Reference Library, although a printed transcript of it had been published by Thomas Sharp, a Coventry antiquarian who published it in a limited edition in 1817, in his *Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries Anciently Performed at Coventry* in 1825 (Sharp).

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[20] Johnston differentiates between the Creed Play, and the Pater Noster Play; in *York*, for example, they were property of two religious guilds which were each responsible for the production of its particular play. The Corpus Christi Guild, whose primary function was to honor the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, was responsible for the Creed Play; the Pater Noster Guild was responsible for the Pater Noster Play. These religious guilds were fraternal organizations comprising laymen and clergy, men and women, joined together for mutual support and dedicated to fulfill a particular function. The production of the Creed Play was an auxiliary function of the guild. The primary purpose of the Pater Noster Guild was the production of the Pater Noster Play ("The Plays of the Religious Guilds " 55-90).

1.2.2 The Prohibition and Suppression of the Plays

As the plays were suppressed, the texts began to disappear and were probably burnt for fear of being found in possession of them.[21] Parish plays were first forbidden as early as 1542 with an injunction from Edmund Bonner, bishop of London:

> That no parsons, vicars, no curates permit or suffer any manner of common plays, games or interludes, to be played, set forth, or declared, within their churches or chapels, where the blessed Sacrament of the altar is, or any other sacrament administered, or Divine service said or sung (quoted in Frere and Kennedy vol. 2: 288).

Nevertheless, some plays survived and records show that they were actually performed under the rule of Queen Mary. This is in fact known from the numerous and continuous questions about parish plays that were still being asked at episcopal visitations of parishes all over England; unfortunately, they too had largely disappeared by the late 1570s. In 1549, the plays sponsored by religious guilds had been brought to an end as the guilds themselves were dissolved under Edward VI. What had been a widespread and flourishing tradition of religious drama began to be eradicated about 1540 in the first wave of the English Reformation. All initiatives of biblical performances almost entirely terminated by 1580, and were finally suppressed by an Elizabethan government resolute to eradicate the last remnants of popular Catholicism (Johnston, "The Manuscripts" 3-5).

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[21] The author is indebted to Professor Alexandra F. Johnston for the invaluable information on the extant texts and on the suppression of the plays.

In the early days of the English Reformation under Henry VIII, Richard Morison (ca. 1510-1556) became the chief propagandist of Thomas Cromwell (ca. 1485-1540), the king's Protestant chancellor. Morison saw in the drama the means to fight the Roman Church in its own terms. He first advocated the abolition of Catholic drama, and then proposed its replacement by Protestant anti-papal drama, also in the vernacular:

> Howmoche better is it that those plaies shulde be forbidden and deleted and others dyvysed to set forthe and declare lyvely before the peoples eies the abhomynation and wickedness of the bisshop of Rome, monkes, ffreers, nonnes, and suche like [. . .] (quoted in Betteridge and Walker 114).

Another important person who contributed to the prohibition and disappearance of Catholic drama was John Bale (1495-1563). A polemicist and playwright, Bale became the perfect means that allowed Cromwell to carry out Morison's ideas: the anti-papal campaign set off in order to gather support for the break from Rome in the mid 1530s. Under the rule of Edward VI, a young William Cecil (ca. 1520-1598) who would later become Elizabeth's first minister and also the royal censor, soon established a program of severe censorship against drama. Under Elizabeth, the necessity to guard the queen's position as head of both the church and the state grew in importance. Strong measures were taken by establishing Ecclesiastical Commissions for both the province of Canterbury and the province of York to deal with seditious material (Atkin 65-91). Both commissions directed the commissioners to enquire closely:

> [. . .] of all and singuler hereticall opynions sedycyous bokes contemptes conspiracies false rumours tales sedicious misbehaviour slanderous wordes or sayinges published inuented or set forth agaynst vs our Contrye or against anye the lawes or statutes of this our realme in suche case prouyded or against the quyet gouer-naunce and rule of our people and subiectes [. . .] (quoted in Howell 1816).

In 1572, the level of hysteria surrounding the performance of plays interpreted as favoring the old religion had reached its peak. Christopher Goodman (ca. 1521-1603), a Chester Protestant clergyman, and Edmund Grindal (ca. 1516–1583), archbishop of York, attempted to stop the performance of *The Chester Plays*. Goodman wrote a letter to the earl of Huntingdon urging the ban of the performance, arguing that the plays give "great comfort to the rebellious papists, & some greater occasions of assembling & conference than their intentions well considered is at this present meet to be allowed" (quoted in Baldwin, Clopper and Mills vol. 1: 143-44). He brought the matter to a close insisting on the fact that authorities should "leave nothing undone which shall be found convenient for the repressing of Papacy, & advancing of godliness, & avoiding of all occasions whereby either perill or danger to her Majesty or to the common weal might begin or grow" (quoted in Baldwin, Clopper and Mills vol. 2: 1144).

The last performance of a biblical play produced by a city is that of *The Coventry Plays* in 1579 at the end of a concerted campaign that began with the suppression of *The Creed Play* in *York*, by Matthew Hutton, in 1568. The date of the suppression of *The Coventry Plays* is interesting, for

the famous Statute 14 from 1572 allegedly banned all street performances of this kind. This law, also known as "An Acte for the Punishment of Vacabondes, and for Relief of the Poore & Impotent" read:

> Where all the partes of this Realme of England and Wales be presentlye with Rogues, Vagabonds, and Sturdy beggers excedinglye pestred, by meanes whereof daylye happeneth in the same Realme Murders, Thefts, and other greate outrages, to the high displeasure of Almightye God, & to the greate annoye of the Comon Wealthe; And for avoydinge Confusion by reason of numbers of Lawes concerninge the premisses standing in force together (quoted in Relihan 38).

It is clear that in spite of Protestantism and the promulgation of this law, the cycle was not initially suppressed. Moreover, it seems that it may have had important support from those who at the time were in opposition to anything that had to do with Catholicism (King and Davidson 3-4). It is interesting to note that in his *Actes and Monuments* (1563), John Foxe recounts the story of the Coventry weaver John Careles. This man was apparently imprisoned under Queen Mary for being a Protestant, although he was "let out to play in the Pageant about the City with his other companions" (Ingram 207-8).

1.2.3 The Extant Manuscripts of the Biblical Plays

In general terms, the extant English biblical plays survive in single copies which, unfortunately, are unrelated to their performance background. The only exception to the rule is *The Chester Plays*: five of the books have been preserved, together with one fragment of the Passion se-

quence, plus two complete copies of single pageants (*The Play of Antichrist* and *The Coopers' Play of the Trial and Flagellation*). In the case of *The York Pageants*, a second copy of *The Scriveners' Play of The Incredulity of Thomas* is also extant. Civic and guild records from York, Chester and Coventry have survived, and they support the performance history of the texts that have been preserved. Nevertheless, much of what is known about medieval drama must be ascertained from plays with no contextual records, or with records of performances that have no corresponding texts.

The sequences of plays that are found in the manuscripts are not organic sequences, and should be considered compilations or anthologies of plays made up from different sources which used different staging techniques and were finally put together in a predetermined order, from Creation to Doomsday.

As will be seen, only three manuscripts—the guild copies of *The Chester Trial and Flagellation*, *The York Incredulity of Thomas* and Robert Croo's copy of the *Coventry Weavers' Pageant*—remained in the hands of their original owners. The rest were found and/or were preserved by people who did not seem to be interested in drama or its role in a proud medieval past, but by individual scholars, often Roman Catholics, who sought to safeguard these scarce instances of a rich cultural heritage. 18th century book collectors protected these manuscripts and eventually started to sell them to public research libraries all over the English speaking world. 19th century scholars rediscovered these plays and they set off the process that still continues today as an attempt at understanding the nature of these

rare texts in their own context, but also "to understand the dramatic traditions of the great English drama of the 1590s that seemed to come out of nowhere" (Johnston, "The Manuscripts" 11).

The Chester Plays

From evidence of varying degrees, it seems that the plays were performed in 1532, 1540, 1546,1550, 1554, 1561, 1567, 1568, 1572, and 1575 (Lumiansky and Mills, *The Chester Essays and Documents* 187-88). However, all texts of *The Chester Plays* are later than 1591, sixteen years after the final performance of the plays. Between 1591 and 1607 five copies of the plays were made,[22] with substantial differences from one another; this disparity is even more significant between the last one written down in 1607 (now in the British Library) and the four others—the earliest from 1591 now in the Huntington Library in California. The oldest manuscript from *The Chester Plays* is the single copy of *The Play of Antichrist* in the National Library of Wales. It is dated ca. 1500 and it appears virtually unaltered in the five versions written down a century later. Nonetheless, evidence from the manuscripts shows that there was more than one version of a number of episodes and sometimes two episodes gave rise to a single play.[23] According to Happé, this may imply that the performance was al-

[22] "Hm Huntington 2" (1591), "A Additional 10305" (1592), "C Chester Coopers' Guild" (1599), "R Harley 2013" (1600), "B Bodley 175" (1604), "H Harley 2124" (1607). For a description of the manuscripts see Lumiansky and Mills, *The Chester Mystery Cycle* vol. 1: xix-xxvii.

[23] The most remarkable example is the merging of the Passion episodes into a single play called *The Trial and Flagellation*, contained in one manuscript, whereas other manuscripts include two separate plays (*Plays 16* and *16A*). Also, *The Noah Play*

tered depending on the circumstances and that a selection was made from the collection of texts (*Cyclic Form* 242).[24]

Regarding the authorship of the manuscripts, there are several instances in which a scribe leaves some reference about his person. The 1591 manuscript was signed by "me Edward Gregorie scholler at Bunburye" (Johnston, "The Manuscripts" 4) which is a town eleven miles southwest of Chester. However, there is no information about who this Gregorie was; in addition, the early history of the manuscript is not clear. It is known that it was owned by an important Cheshire family, the Egertons, since the name "John Egerton esq." appears in folio 41.[25] Subsequently, in 1821 the duke of Devonshire purchased the manuscript from John Kemble, and it was later sold to Henry Huntington for his new library in Pasadena, California. Huntington had also acquired the *Towneley* manuscript, and that is why these two important play texts are labeled Huntington Library MS 1 and 2.

The 1592 manuscript and the 1600 British Library copies were written down by George Bellin, the Coopers' Guild scribe; he copied the other single play, *The Trial and Flagellation* for the archives of his guild in 1599. The 1592 and the 1600 versions of the full text are not identical copies. It appears that Bellin had access to other sources when he copied the second

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which includes the scene of the raven and the dove (*Play 3*) is only found in one of manuscript (Lumiansky & Mills, *Chester Essays and Documents* 35, 195.

[24] On the productions of the plays after the Reformation, see Theodore K. Lerud."Negotiating the Reformation in the Northwest: The Reinvention of the Chester Cycle." *Reformation* 8.1 (2003): 1-39.

[25] The first three earls of Bridgewater (1579–1649; 1622–1686 and 1646–1701) were named John Egerton.

version. The 1592 copy was probably intended as a reading text, and that is why it does not contain the banns and the proclamation. This manuscript was acquired by a Cheshire family called Cowper in the 18th century Subsequently, the British Library purchased it from the sale of Richard Herber's Library in 1836.

The 1600 copy which contains both the banns and the proclamation, was part of the family collection of a Cheshire antiquarian named Randall Holmes (1571-1707). It was bought by Robert Harley, earl of Oxford, through the good offices of the Bishop of Chester in 1707, and it became an item in his collection, transferred to the British Library in 1753. The 1607 manuscript was also part of Randall Holmes' collected works and was also eventually deposited at the British Library via the Harleian collection. It presents many differences with regard the other versions; of the three scribes who seem to have intervened in its compilation, the hand of James Miller, a minor canon at St Werburgh's (Chester) Cathedral from 1605-1618, is identifiable.

The 1604 manuscript, now in the Bodleian Library (Oxford) is not neatly written. A note that appears in a late 17th century hand attributes the play to a Wm. Bedford.[26] According to the records, someone named William Bedford became clerk of the Chester Brewers' Guild in 1606. Richard Middleton Massey, keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, donated

[26] "Wm. Bedford's twenty-four pageants or playes played by the twenty-four (?) of the City of Chester." (quoted in Lumiansky & Mills vol. 1: xxi).

the manuscript to the Bodleian in 1710 (Lumiansky and Mills, *The Chester Mystery Cycle* vol 1: xiii-xxvii).

In the view of most owners these manuscripts seem to have been rather artifacts than living theater, that is, monuments of the past to be preserved. All the identified scribes of the *Chester* manuscripts were closely related to the city, and two of them even were associated with a guild. Their interests seem to have been to preserve a part of their city's history before it was too late. Four of the manuscripts were subsequently preserved by important Cheshire families with antiquarian interests—the Egertons, the Cowpers and the Holmes. One of them reached the hands of an Oxford antiquarian, two passed through the hands of noble book collectors and, fortunately, all of them ended up at important libraries where they are now preserved. The work contains 24 pageants (Baldwin et al. 125-51).

The York Plays

A great deal of archival material has survived from the city of York, and that has provided invaluable information on the spectacle. The manuscript of *The York Plays* (47 pageants), MS Additional 35290, now at the British Library, is the authorized Register of the plays written down for the city in the mid 1470s.[27] In his edition of the plays, Beadle sustains that it can be dated 1476–1477, and connects it with the appointment of Nicholas

[27] For a study of the York Register and further information on the productions of the play, see King, *The York Mystery Cycle* 20.

Lancaster, a lawyer, in the household of Richard duke of Gloucester, as Common Clerk (Beadle, *The York Plays* xviii).

In order to prevent the guilds[28] from deviating from the text, a civic official held the Register at the first station at Michaelgate, York. Unlike the *Chester* and the *Towneley* manuscripts, the *York* codex has many marginal notations which point to the fact that the Register is not an antiquarian's compilation but, rather, a book which contains the real plays as they were performed between 1477–1478. Most importantly, the annotations suggest the changes that were made in the final nine decades of its existence. Apart from the aforementioned MS Additional 35290, there is a copy of *Pageant 41* corresponding to the Incredulity of Thomas; it is the so-called "Sykes Manuscript," preserved in the York City Archives. It is not dated, but its handwriting points to a 16th century scribe (Beadle, *The York Plays* 43).

A resolute assault on the *York* civic plays was organized by the Ecclesiastical Commission of the North. This campaign started with the prohibition of Matthew Hutton's lost *Creed Play*.[29] The cycle was enacted for the last time in 1569, although the last performance of a civic religious drama in York was that of the "Pater Noster Play" in 1572, a significant date which coincided with the enforcement of the aforementioned "Acte for the Punishment of Vacabondes." In 1579, the York City Council de-

[28] On the guilds at York see Cristina Mourón Figueroa. *El Ciclo de York: Sociedad y Cultura en la Inglaterra Bajomedieval*. Santiago de Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 2005. 121-143.

[29] Hutton was Dean of York in 1468.

cided to enact the cycle again, but it was also agreed that first the "booke shalbe caried to my Lord Archebisshop and Mr Deane to correcte, if that my Lord Archebisshop doo well like theron" (quoted in Johnston and Rogerson vol. 1: 33).

The first owner to be identified after the Tudor era was Henry Fairfax whose name appears on the flyleaf: "H: Fairfax's Book 1695." He was the son of the fourth baron Fairfax, a direct descendant of Sir Thomas Fairfax of Denton and Nun Appleton, a member of both the Council of the North and the Ecclesiastical Commission of the North in 1579. Sir Thomas had married the widow of John Rokeby, of the influential Rokeby family, one of whose members, another John Rokeby, had been a serving lawyer of the Council and Commission. Lady Fairfax was the daughter of Alderman George Gale, a goldsmith who had been mayor of York in 1535, one of the years when the "Creed Play" had been substituted for the "Corpus Christi play." Gale's interest in *The York Plays* is accredited by the fact that he rented a station[30] at Petergate in 1542, 1551 and 1554. It is possible that, when the "Corpus Christi Play" came into the possession of the archbishop and, by extension,[31] of the Ecclesiastical Commission, Fairfax simply took it home, knowing his wife's family's association with the play. Some time before his death in 1705, Henry Fairfax gave the manuscript to Leeds antiquarian and historian Ralph Thoresby.

[30] One of the places to view the plays.
[31] On the Corpus Christi Play see King, *The York Mystery Cycle* 7-30.

The manuscript is included in Thoresby's 1715 catalogue, although there is no indication that either he or his staff were aware of its nature.

When Thoresby's library was sold at auction in 1764, the manuscript passed to Horace Walpole (1717-1797)[32] at Strawberry Hill, where he kept it until bookseller Thomas Rudd purchased it for Benjamin Heywood Bright in 1842. When Bright died in 1843 the manuscript by now known as *The York Play* went to a Reverend Thomas Russell, from whom the earl of Ashburnham obtained it in 1847. The British Library then got it from this last owner in 1899. The first edition of the plays was carried out by Lucy Toulmin Smith (1838-1911), a reputed Boston scholar and librarian, while Ashburnham still owned it.[33] That first edition was published in 1885.

The N-Town Play

The N-Town Play, which contains 42 pageants, has the shelf mark "Cotton Vespasian D viii." The plays were known variously as *The Ludus Coventriae* (or *Play of Coventry*) *The Hegge Plays*, *The Cotton Plays*, or *The Lincoln Plays*. These names were given after the owners of the manuscript or were simply the result of misunderstandings. It was first called *Ludus Coventriae* because of a comment in Latin written on the flyleaf of the

[32] Fourth earl of Oxford (1717–1797), author, politician, and patron of the arts (Woodfine).

[33] For further information on the history of this work, see Richard Beadle and Alan J. Fletcher, eds. "The York Corpus Christi Play." *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*. Cambridge: CUP, 2008. 99-124.

codex by Robert Bruce Cotton's librarian, Richard James (ca. 1591-1638), in the 1620s:

> Contenta Novi Testamenti scenice expressa et actitata olim per monachos sive Fratres mendicantes: vulgo dicitur hic liber "Ludus Coventriae," sive ludus corporis Christi scribitur metris Anglicanis (quoted in Spector vol. 1: xiii).

However, James did not mean that the book was commonly referred to by that name. This is the sole evidence upon which the title usually given to the manuscript is founded, since James claims that the contents are from the New Testament. According to Dodds "This shows that he had not read or even examined the manuscript, as the first seven plays are founded upon the Old Testament; then follow two plays on apocryphal gospels, while the tenth opens with a medieval allegory" (80). As a matter of fact, it is not until the tenth play that the New Testament is reached. The manuscript is now called *The N-Town Plays* since its somewhat enigmatic banns seem to indicate that it was a traveling play to be performed at an "N-Town:" "N" is generally considered to be an abbreviation of "Nomen" (Name), i.e., "fill in the gap with the name of the town" (Johnston, "The Manuscripts" 6). It has long been considered a compilation of diverse plays intended to be enacted in various ways, although the motivation and methodology of the scribe who was working in the 1460s is uncertain. The true nature of the work was unveiled thanks to Peter Meredith. His physical analysis of the manuscript revealed a red dot in the first capital of some of the stanzas in the plays dealing with the early life

of the Virgin Mary and the Nativity, which in his opinion referred to an autonomous five-pageant *Mary Play* embedded in a typical sequence of a biblical story (Meredith, *The Mary Play*).[34]

In the early 17th century, the manuscript was acquired by Robert Hegge of Durham who was encouraged to take up antiquarian interests by mathematician and antiquarian Thomas Allen (1540?–1632) of Gloucester Hall, Oxford. Allen had begun collecting manuscripts in 1563 and progressively became the owner of the largest private collection of manuscripts in Oxford. In 1598, he was appointed to a committee that would assist Thomas Bodley (1545–1613) in his library project. It is quite possible that Allen himself could have given the manuscript to Hegge, which would have passed to Sir Robert Bruce Cotton,[35] on Robert Hegge's death in 1629, or some years later. The work does not appear in the Cottonian catalogue of 1621 but in the next one, dated between 1631 and 1638. The library, which was sold to the nation by his grandson Sir John Cotton in 1701 became one of the core collections of the British Library (Granger 36-80).

[34] On The Mary Play, see Fletcher, "The N-Town Plays" 163-88.

[35] Cotton became one of the early members of the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries together with historian and herald William Camden, his former teacher. Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign, he hoped to form a national library merging his book collection with the queen's. However, this idea did not succeed and Cotton established his own library for scholars (DNB).

The Towneley Plays

Known as *The Wakefield Mystery Cycle* in the past, scholars now agree that the extant *Towneley* manuscript is not connected to the plays of the Yorkshire town of Wakefield (Johnston, "The Manuscripts" 4). *The Towneley Plays* is a unique book for it contains two pageants on the Adoration of the Shepherds traditionally known as *Prima Pastorum* (*The First Shepherds' Play*) and *Secunda Pastorum* (*The Second Shepherds' Play*). According to critics such as Robinson, *The Second Shepherds' Play* is a revision of the preceding piece (133-36). It seems, however, that the two shepherds' plays were not intended to be enacted together, simply because many of the themes and ideas of the first play are also found in the second.[36]

Critics have noted the poetic innovations in *The Towneley Plays* particularly in the Noah play (*Play 3*), the two shepherds' pieces, the Herod pageant (*Play 16*), and the Buffeting of Christ play (*Play 21*). The type of stanza in these texts is attributed to an unknown single hand referred to in the past as the "Wakefield Master" because, as said before, the plays were believed to have been performed at the said city. These poetic strophes are nine-line stanzas which include one quatrain with an inner rhyme and a tail-rhymed cauda, rhyming AAAABCCCB. However, modern scholars such as Stevens sustain that the author actually wrote following a thirteen-line pattern. Nevertheless, the number of syllables in the lines varies con-

[36] On the relationship of the two plays and their composition, see for instance Michelle Ann Abate. "Oversight as Insight: Reading The Second Shepherd's Play." *Early Theatre* 8.1 (2005): 95-108.

siderably, and the number of stressed syllables may be counted at two or three per line in the thirteen-line strophe.[37]

It is generally accepted by modern scholars that this anthology of biblical plays now referred to as *The Towneley Plays* was ordered by the Towneleys, a recusant family of lawyers who lived in Burnley (West Lancashire) during the reign of Mary Tudor (1553-1558). The work contains 32 pageants, although the pre-history of the plays contained in the manuscript is uncertain. It seems that the original manuscript was purchased by the family before Christopher Towneley's death in 1674[38] and that, subsequently, the manuscript was sold in 1814 to Sir Isaac Lyon Goldsmid who ordered a new binding and sold it to John North in 1815; North, in turn, sold it back in 1819 to a member of the Towneley family, Edward Peregrine Towneley (Meredith, "The Towneley Cycle" 134-62).

The Towneley Plays became the first of the biblical collections to appear in print as it was edited for the first volume of the Surtees Society[39] in 1836. After that, it was bought by bookseller and publisher Bernard Quaritch (1819–1899) in 1883, who sold it again in 1900 to Sir Edward Coates who sold it at auction to Henry Huntington in 1922. It was then that the manuscript became Huntington MS 1 (Johnston, "The Manuscripts" 7).

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[37] For a discussion on the type of stanza, see Martin Stevens. "Did the Wakefield Master Write a Nine-line Stanza?."*Comparative Drama* (1981): 99-119.

[38] The first Towneley name to appear on the manuscript.

[39] Founded in 1834 in honour of Robert Surtees of Mainsforth (1779-1834), the author of *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* (1816-1840). The society focuses on the publication of manuscripts illustrative of the history of Northumbria, mainly of County Durham and Northumberland in North East England (*Surtees Society*).

There are still many doubts about the performance of the plays. It seems that this codex was assembled for reading and not for performance, although the editors of the texts, Stevens and Cawley, noted that there are some references to performance in the manuscript, some of them added as marginalia (*The Towneley Plays* vol. 1: xxiv and ff). According to Happé, in view of the eclectic nature of the individual plays, there is a strong possibility that only some of them were in fact enacted, although such performances must have been widely different among themselves. Furthermore, it is not clear that the plays were ever performed in the cyclic form as they appear in the extant manuscript (*Cyclic Form* 222-23). Thus, it could be argued that *The Towneley Plays* is not to be considered a cycle, at least not in the sense that *York* or *Chester* are cycles. To cut a long story short, *Towneley* is not believed to be a performance text any more.[40] As Martin Stevens puts it, they were "designed specifically for the reader of the plays" ("The Towneley Plays Manuscript" 161).

1.3 Non-Cyclic Plays: Single Plays

Parishes in late medieval England seem to have performed single-episode biblical plays or sequences of plays without the intricate structure of a "cycle." That is the case of St Laurence's parish in Reading, and other areas in the Thames Valley. In addition, the Nativity sequence in the Digby manuscript may corroborate this idea. In this sense, Johnston

[40] For further discussion see Epp, "The Towneley Plays, or, The Hazards of Cycling" 121-50.

highlights that the poet figure reminds the audience at the beginning of the play that the previous year they had enacted the Adoration of the Shepherds and the Magi and, at the end of his speech he promises *Christ and the Doctors* for the next year ("The Manuscrips" 8-9). *The Northampton Abraham* and *The Brome Abraham* are two independent plays without adjoining episodes on the story of Abraham and Isaac, although they are noticeably similar to analogous episodes in the *Chester*, *Towneley* and *N-Town* manuscripts.[41] Those two plays appear in miscellanies or commonplace books, i.e., manuscripts in which items of interest with little connection to one another were copied down (Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* 153). *The Northampton Abraham* appears to have been written by a single mid-15th century hand; in addition to the play, the manuscript contains part of Chaucer's "Steadfastness," a series of Yorkist political poems; in particular, one them celebrates the Yorkist victory at the battle of Northampton (1460). It also contains a record of the mayors and bailiffs of Northampton who held office in the early 1460s (Cawley, Stanley, and Davis 33-34). *The Brome Abraham* manuscript, now in the Yale University Library, dates back to the late 15th century and is a compilation of literary works and accounts. The play is written in a hand that has been dated after 1454. Many scholars have commented on the correlation between this play and the

[41] Along with the *Shrewsbury Fragments*, the *Play of the Sacrament*, the *Pride of Life*, *Dux Moraud* and several other unidentified fragments are extant. See Norman Davis, ed. *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments*. Oxford: EETS (OUP), 1970.

equivalent episode in *The Chester Plays* (Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* 151).[42]

Another single play manuscript is *Christ's Death and Resurrection*, which, according to Johnston, belongs to a genre that emerged late in the tradition of biblical drama associated with Easter Monday and Tuesday with connections with the liturgy of Good Friday and Easter morning.[43] Moderns scholars, who date the manuscript around 1520, suggest that it is clearly a Carthusian text; they furthermore connect it with the Yorkshire Carthusian houses at Mount Grace or Kingston-Upon-Hull. It is mainly a meditative text, although the first section of the manuscript contains chronicle material.[44]

Finally, although they are simply single speeches, the *Shrewsbury Fragments* (Shrewsbury School VI and former Mus. III. 42) held by Shrewsbury School, date from the early 15th century and contain dialogues for a Shepherd in a Nativity play (*Officium Pastorum*), one of the three Marys at the Resurrection, and a Cleophas piece from an Emmaus play. It has been speculated that they may have been three different parts for a single actor. Davis related them to the Latin liturgical tropes traditionally known as "liturgical drama" discussed below. Thus, Davis, in his edition, actually refers to these three works as *Officium Pastorum*, *Officium Resurrectionis*

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[42] See also Cawley, Stanley, and Davis 49-50.

[43] Johnston identifies this play as a genre that emerged late in the tradition of biblical drama. See Alexandra F. Johnston. "The Emerging Pattern of the Easter Play in England." *Medieval English Theatre* 20 (1998): 3–23.

[44] See Donald Baker, John L. Murphy and Louis B. Hall, Jr. *The Late Medieval Religious Plays of Bodleian Mss Digby 133 and E. Museo 160*. London: EETS (OUP), 1982.

and *Officium Peregrinorum*, respectively. Some other authors refer to these three pieces as "Quem Quaeritis," "Pastores" and "Peregrini" (Chambers vol. 2: 90), or as "Officium Pastorum," "Visitatio Sepulchri" and "Peregrinus" (Young vol 2: 124).

Chapter 2
The Castilian Plays

2.1 Religious Theater in Medieval Castile

The history of medieval Castilian drama is characterized by a lack of dramatic texts between the 12th century *Auto de los Reyes Magos* (The Play of the Magi) and Gómez Manrique's single Christmas Play *La Representaçión del Nasçimiento de Nuestro Señor* in the 15th century The anonymous *Auto de los Reyes Magos* is a very short piece—only 147 verses—written hurriedly at the end of a codex that contains two other works on exegetic theology in Latin which opens with a description of its content: "Hoc continent Cantica Canticorum et Lamentationes Ieremias" (This [codex] contains the Song of Songs and the Lamentations of Jeremiah).[45] As Surtz argues, the play is not a mere liturgical rite, for it reveals a theatrical conscience in the modern sense of the word (Surtz, *Birth of a Theater* 17). The next piece found in the corpus is Alonso del Campo's *Auto de la Pasión*

[45] For a detailed information on the language see Enzo Franchini. "Los Primeros Textos Literarios: Del Auto de los Reyes Magos al Mester de Clerecía." *Historia de la Lengua Española* (2004): 325-353. For an edition and contextualization of the play, see Miguel Ángel Pérez-Priego. *Teatro Medieval*. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 2009. 51-66, 119- 31. See also Alan Deyermond. "El Auto de los Reyes Magos y el Renacimiento del Siglo XII." *Actas del IX Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas* 1986. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, Institut für Romanische Philologie, 1989.

(The Play of the Passion), a short drama on the Passion of Jesus which has been claimed to be composed between 1486 and 1499.[46]

Another biblical play, *Auto de la Huida a Egipto* (The Play of the Flight into Egypt),[47] is also extant. This anonymous work is preserved in a manuscript once housed in the Franciscan convent of Santa María de la Bretonera[48] near Burgos, in northern Spain. The authorship of the text is still under much debate. In the 1940s, theater historians attributed this work to Gómez Manrique. It is more likely, however, that it was written in a Franciscan milieu, or even composed by the nuns at San Pedro de la Bretonera as Herrán Alonso hypothesizes (624).[49] The ten-folio manuscript is today at the Spanish National Library (R/31133) and is preceded by nine poems. Little is known about how the text was performed or by whom,[50] although it must have been copied at some point between the founding of the convent in 1446 and its binding, together with two other books purchased in 1512. However, the handwriting points to the late 15th or early 16th century (Pérez-Priego, *Teatro Medieval* 76-79).

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[46] For further details on the play, see Francisco Javier Grande Quejigo. "Estructura y Representación en el 'Auto de la Pasión' de Alonso del Campo." *Anuario de Estudios Filológicos* 19 (1996): 255-276.

[47] The manuscript bears no title whatsoever. Justo García Morales entitled it *Auto de la Huída a Egipto* in his 1948 edition (García Morales). For further reference on the nature of the codex, see Emma Herrán Alonso. "El Tema de la Huida a Egipto en el Teatro Áureo." *Actas Selectas del XIV Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Teatro Español y Novohispano de los Siglos de Oro 2009. Cervantes Virtual*. 2010. *Bib.cervantesvirtual*. Web. 624-25.

[48] Convento de Clarisas de San Pedro de la Bretonera.

[49] See Ronald E. Surtz, "The 'Franciscan Connection' in the Early Castilian Theater." *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 35.2 (1983): 141-52;

[50] For an analysis of the possible enactment of the play, see Ronald E. Surtz. "El 'Auto de la huida a Egipto' como Peregrinación Virtual." *Boletín de la Real Academia Española* 90.301 (2010): 121-130.

2.2 Fray Íñigo de Mendoza

Very few biographical details are known about Fray Íñigo (1425-1507).[51] It seems that he entered the Franciscan Order as a young man but lived at and moved around the court "presumably in elegant style in spite of his vow of poverty" (Stern, "Fray Íñigo..." 197). That is why the friar was the target of criticism by jealous contemporaries, as the poet Vázquez Palencia (1500-1560) highlights in one of his poems:

> Este religioso santo,
> metido en varios plazeres,
> es un lobo en pardo manto;
> ¿cómo entiende y sabe tanto
> del trato de las mujeres?[52]
>
> TRANS.:
> This holy religious man,
> Immersed himself in various pleasures,
> He is but a wolf in a brown coat;
> How does he understand and know so much
> About dealing with women?

Coplas de "Vita Christi" includes the first non-liturgical dramatization of the Annunciation to the Shepherds in Castile. It is written in octosyllabic verses grouped in ten-line stanzas (*quintillas dobles*) with a varying rhyme scheme, each of them called *copla*.[53] The text, which was originally preserved in a manuscript known as "Oñate-Castañeda" (ca. 1467), appeared later in a printed edition in Zamora in 1482. In the 15th century, the six

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[51] For a bibliographic account see Julio Rodríguez-Puértolas. *Fray Íñigo de Mendoza y sus Coplas de "Vita Christi"*. Madrid: Gredos, 1968. 13-64.

[52] Quoted in Stern, "Fray Íñigo..." 198 fn 3.

[53] On the formal features of the poem, see Rodríguez-Puértolas, *Fray Íñigo de Mendoza* 118-47.

editions of *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*,[54] nearly all of them undated, are evidence of the poet's popularity during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs. He composed a wide range of religious works, but also profane ones.[55]

Historians have neglected the relevance of Fray Íñigo in the development of Spanish drama, perhaps because of the peculiarities of his hybrid text, a long didactic poem that includes several dramatic passages as well as verses that may be ascribed to other genres. With regard to this mixture of genres, Stern comments:

> The inclusion of a dramatic interlude in a narrative poem should not surprise us. The modern classifying mind that has neatly divided poetry into lyrical, dramatic and narrative is perhaps befuddled by the total lack of such distinctions in the Middle Ages. But we need only recall the *cancionero* of the Archpriest of Hita in which we encounter sacred and profane verse, narrative and lyrical coplas as well as some embryonic dramatic efforts ("Fray Íñigo..." 200 ft 8).

Some major New Testament episodes such as the Annunciation to Mary, the Annunciation to the Shepherds and the Nativity, the Magi, the Slaughter of the Innocents, the Flight into Egypt or the Circumcision are presented in this work. However, in spite of the high dramatic potential of the short shepherds' scene, there are no records which may indicate that it was ever enacted. In any case, Fray Íñigo's dramatization of the Lukan narrative contains all the characteristic features found in subsequent Castilian shepherds' pieces.

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[54] For information on the different editions, see Keith Whinnom. "The Printed Editions and the Text of the Works of Fray Íñigo de Mendoza." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 39.3 (1962): 137-52. See also Rodríguez-Puértolas, *Fray Íñigo de Mendoza* 84-117.

[55] For a complete catalogue of his works see Rodríguez-Puértolas, *Fray Íñigo de Mendoza* 66-83.

In the first half of the 20th century, and before Stern's seminal studies, theater historians had failed to classify Fray Íñigo's work. Stern is therefore the first scholar to have actually described the Nativity scene in the *Coplas* as having a great dramatic potential only comparable to the subsequent works of Enzina and his contemporaries ("Dramatic Ritual" 197). In addition, as it happens with regard to the rest of Castilian Nativity dramas, historians have not analyzed this work in the light of other European plays on the same subject matter.[56] Stern however acknowledges Fray Íñigo's contribution to the development of Castilian drama, even if she fails to place this author within a wider European tradition, ignoring, for instance, the similarities with the English texts ("Nativity Celebrations" 207-25).

It should first be noted that there is a substantial difference between the Oñate-Castañeda manuscript (ca. 1467) and the 1482 princeps edition, which includes a significant verbal *amplificatio*. In the manuscript, the dialogue of the shepherds is covered in *coplas* 128-41, but the printed version adds six extra *coplas*. As in the manuscript, the printed text may be subdivided into three well distinct scenes, as it is the case of other shepherds' plays. This is the result of splitting the angelic announcement into two parts, namely, a first scene which basically entails a farce involving the shepherds (*coplas* 128-31), and the dramatization of the angelic mes-

[56] Pérez-Priego marginally mentions in a footnote, as a novelty and with certainly outdated terminology, that the Wakefield *Secunda Pastorum* (i.e., *The Towneley First Shepherds' Play*) develops the shepherds' dialogue, ignoring *The First Shepherds' Play* and the rest of English pastoral dramas ("Esquemas Representacionales" 152, fn 15).

sage itself, which takes up all of scenes two and three (*coplas* 136-41). The six new *coplas* actually develop and expand the first scene, adding a farcical tone to the interaction of the shepherds prior to the coming of the angel, including common themes and motifs found in most Castilian, English and European shepherds' plays (the characters' pranks, constant allusions to earthly matters such as eating or drinking, their hardships, and so forth). Present-day historians do acknowledge this re-elaboration, but Álvarez Pellitero, for instance, considers it to be unfortunate:

> La adición refleja un mero interés costumbrista, referido a vestidos e instrumentos pastoriles, al tiempo que presta una especial atención a la expresión lingüística arrusticada. [. . .] [T]al barroquización estorba a la coherencia dramática de personajes y acciones (17).
>
> TRANS.: The addition reflects a mere picturesque interest concerning the garments and accoutrements of the shepherds, and it pays special attention to their rustic linguistic expression. This baroque treatment hinders the dramatic coherence of characters and actions.

Álvarez Pellitero's assessment of the impact of the added *coplas* in the printed version show her preference for a composition which reflects more faithfully the liturgical tradition. This is a fallacy in itself, since there is little or no evidence to prove that the secular shepherds' plays derive or evolve from the *Officium Pastorum*.

In addition, this scholar seems to ignore that these scenes became standard fare in Spanish Nativity plays and were present in other European vernacular texts. As Stern claims, when the two versions are compared, "the printed text expands and completes the Nativity scene" ("Nativity Celebrations" 208). In fact, the closing stanzas in the princeps edi-

tion replace the final succinct *copla* of the manuscript, and helps advance the dramatic action. Not only that, it also improves the quality of the Nativity play by incorporating highly devotional scenes such as Mary's worship of her son through a series of songs (*coplas* 82-84). The text indicates, however, that Mary's songs are sung by the angels (*copla* 85), perhaps to avoid having a woman performing this role on stage and to solve the major dramaturgical problem of Mary's delivery. Actually, the adoration of angels follows (*coplas* 86-97), which the shepherds are able to behold on their way to the stable. It is then that the herdsmen consider that they should worship the new-born too, and entice other fellow shepherds to go along with them. However, as in the vast majority of Castilian plays, the actual encounter with the Holy Family does not take place on stage:

> Después del niño adorado
> comiençan públicamente
> a descubrir a la gente
> el secreto revelado (*copla* 149, ll. 7-10).
>
> TRANS.:
> After worshiping the child,
> They publicly start
> To unveil to people
> The revealed secret

As may be seen, both the adoration and the significance of the event are presented to the audience by a narrator. The author solves this dramatically complex moment in four lines, perhaps to avoid embarrassing scenes which might have implied simultaneous action or, as said above, a woman in the role of Mary. Furthermore, it could be argued that if this text was meant to be read and not enacted, the actual moment of the adoration

would have been taken for granted. Nevertheless, since it is not known whether the text was ever performed, the dramaturgical solutions to these problems also remain unsolved. As the rest of plays in which no actual encounter with the baby exists, whether the shepherds worshiped a makeshift nativity scene or a painting of the Holy Family placed *ad hoc* on stage is a matter of conjecture. What is important here is the stress on what the shepherds have actually witnessed and on their role as the people responsible for teaching and enlightening readers or spectators on such a holy event. Thus, the characters "preach" about what they have just witnessed, as the author himself announces at the opening of *copla* 150: "Cuenta el un pastor todo lo que avía visto" (A shepherd recounts all he had seen) developing the sentence from Luke 2:17: "videntes autem cognoverunt de verbo quod dictum erat illis de puero hoc" (And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child).

The direct source of the later printed version of *Coplas de "Vita Christi"* is unknown but, given the similarities with other contemporary Castilian, English and European nativity plays, it may be assumed that Fray Íñigo was acquainted with the dramatic conventions of his age. That is probably the reason behind the author's remark at the end of the dialogue that he dramatized the biblical passage in such a way: "para poder recrear,|despertar y renovar| la gana de los letores; *copla* 156, ll. 8-10" (In order to recreate |Awake, and renew |The readers' interest). In other words, he has a clear dramatic and didactic intention in mind: by renovat-

ing a well-known biblical story, he hopes to catch the readers'/viewers' attention while leaving intact the text's main message: the timeless nature of Jesus's Birth.

One of Fray Íñigo's contributions to the development of subsequent Castilian pastoral drama is his use of the *Sayagués* dialect in the shepherds' speeches. It was a dialect originally spoken in Sayago, a region in the province of Zamora, in Northern Spain, but the author developed this rustic speech especially in the printed version of *Coplas*. This is worth highlighting, because he was the first Castilian author to use such a convention[57] to characterize and single out a group of characters, a practice that would be imitated by virtually all authors in subsequent Nativity plays and, eventually, transferred to non-religious pastoral works. As a matter of fact, the first work in which a rustic speaks *Sayagués* is another piece attributed to Fray Íñigo,[58] *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*.[59] Although it falls outside the scope of this study, the importance of *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo* in the development of pastoral drama appears to be crucial, although it has not deserved enough attention by critics.[60] This work, which is close to a morality play

[57] For more information on this literary *Sayagués* see Charlotte Stern. "Sayago and Sayagués in Spanish History and Literature." *Hispanic Review* 29.3 (1961): 217-37. See also Blanca Periñán. "Sobre el Sayagués de Castillejo." Ed. Antonella Gallo and Katerina Vaiopulos. *Por Tal Variedad Tiene Belleza: Omaggio a Maria Grazia Profeti*. Florence: Alinea Editrice, 2012. 143-64.

[58] The attribution of *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo* to Fray Íñigo derives actually from a reference found in *Coplas de "Vita Christi"* to the former work (*copla* 196, ll. 7-10). See Julio Rodríguez-Puértolas "Sobre el Autor de las Coplas de Mingo Revulgo." *Homenaje a Rodríguez-Moñino*. Madrid: Castalia, 1966. 131-42.

[59] For a critical edition of this work, see Vivana Brodey and Juan de Mena, eds. *Las Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1986.

[60] On their relevance in the development of pastoral drama in Spain, see Jeremy Lawrence. "La Tradición Pastoril antes de 1530." Ed. Javier Guijarro Ceballos. *Hu-*

as far as genre is concerned, is relevant to the current study because the two shepherds who feature in it, namely, Arribato, a sort of prophet, and Mingo Revulgo, a rustic figure, actually communicate in the aforementioned dialect.

In *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*, Fray Íñigo develops the dialectal convention even further. It should be noted, however, that the dialect spoken by the shepherds is a literary construct derived from the original local dialect of Sayago. It was used precisely to convey rusticity, coarseness, illiteracy, a state of close-mindedness and, by extension, a marginal and unredeemed nature. Therefore, their characteristic regional aspect ascribes them to a specific geographical area, Northern Castile, and also sets the shepherds apart from other types of characters. Thus, their brogue links them to a particular group of social outcasts who are rustic, coarse, and invariably comic.[61] All these characteristics appear in the rest of Castilian shepherds' plays, with the exception of Gómez Maríquez's piece.

2.3 Gómez Manrique

Gómez Manrique y de Castilla (1412-1490) was born in Amusco (Palencia). He was a poet, soldier, politician and dramatist. He became a pub-

manismo y Literatura en Tiempos de Juan de Encina. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1999. 117-18.

[61] This group would include other types such as hermits and savages. For a study of different types of rustic characters and other marginal types, refer to Alberto del Río. "Figuras al Margen: Algunas Notas Sobre Ermitaños, Salvajes y Pastores en tiempos de Juan del Encina." Ed. Javier Guijarro Ceballos. *Humanismo y Literatura en Tiempos de Juan de Encina*. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1999. 147-63.

lic figure at an early age, acting later as a moderating political personality.[62] He was a renowned writer at the time, following in the footsteps of his uncle, Íñigo López de Mendoza y de la Vega, Marquis of Santillana. However, his production was overshadowed by that of his nephew Jorge Manrique (died 1478), the author of *Coplas por la Muerte de su Padre* (1476).

Apart from *La Representación del Nasçimiento de Nuestro Señor*, he wrote *Lamentaciones Fechas para la Semana Santa* (ca. 1458), which is a play on the Passion, and two *momos*, or interludes, played at court, and also a large number of poems.[63] A complete text of *La Representación* is preserved in the *Cancionero de Gómez Manrique* at the Biblioteca de Palacio (Ms. 1250).[64] It seems that the author himself had his works copied in this *Cancionero* for the 4th Count of Benavente, Rodrigo Alfonso Pimentel.

A rubric in the manuscript seems to indicate that the play was written at the request of Manrique's sister, María, a nun at the Poor Clare Monastery of Calabazanos in Palencia, presumably to be enacted by the nuns themselves as part of their Christmas celebrations (Pérez-Priego, *Teatro Medieval* 70). Since María Manrique became abbess of the Monastery in 1468, it is likely that the play was composed between 1458 and 1468 (Salvador Miguel 140-41). Some early critics of the play include Crawford, who claimed that "this little play shows slight progress, if any, in dramatic

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[62] For a comprehensive account of Gómez Manrique's life, see Gómez Manrique. *Cancionero*. Ed. Francisco Vidal González. Madrid: Cátedra, 2003. 11-41.

[63] On his literary production, see Vidal González 42-67.

[64] On the details of the manuscript and the fragmentary extant copies, see Miguel Ángel Pérez-Priego. *Teatro Medieval*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2009. 135.

art over the Auto de los Reyes Magos" (6). Other scholars have highlighted structure as a major aspect in the author's dramatic technique. Sieber, for instance, stresses not only its structure, but also its symmetry; thus, he proposed to "call the fusion of form and content in [Manrique's] drama the dramatic structure; and the harmony and balance of this structure, dramatic symmetry" (118).

La Representación del Nasçimiento contains a great deal of biblical typology and includes episodes from the Nativity together with references to the Passion, namely, the embryonic Annunciation to the Shepherds included in this study which ends with the characters offering the child the symbols of His Passion and Death. As Pérez-Priego explains: "La unión del tema de la Navidad y el de la Pasión [. . .] hacen de la Representación un breve y condensado drama que, a la manera de los misterios europeos, viene a recoger toda la historia de la salvación; *Teatro Medieval* 74" (The blend of the Nativity and the Passion topics [...] turns the Representación into a short and condensed drama which, as in the case of European mysteries, recounts the whole history of salvation). However, unlike the other plays, the shepherds in this drama do not speak *Sayagués* and are not comic, although, interestingly enough, the work opens with a humorous episode devoted to Joseph's doubt about Mary, a unique case in Castilian drama:

> Lo que dize JOSEPE, sospechando de Nuestra Señora:
>
> ¡Oh viejo desventurado!
> Negra dicha fue la mía
> en casarme con María

por quien fuesse deshonrado.
Ya la veo bien preñada,
no sé de quién, nin de cuánto.
Dizen que d'Espíritu Santo,
mas yo d'esto non sé nada.

TRANS.:
Oh wretched old man!
It was ill luck
To marry Mary
Who dishonored me.
I can now see she is really pregnant,
Who got her thus or how far gone, I don't know.
They say it's the Holy Spirit's,
But I know nothing about this.

The dramatization of Joseph's doubt about Mary is a comic scene which is recurrent in English biblical dramas. Actually, *York* (*Play XIII*) and *N-Town* (Play XII) deal exclusively with this matter. It is also found in *Towneley* (*Play 10*, ll. 135-373), and in *Chester* (*Play VI*, ll. 123-28) . The biblical source for both Gómez Manrique's *Representación* and for the English plays is Matthew 1:18-25, although there are clear embellishments from various apocryphal and meditative texts. Specifically, Joseph's accusations derive from *Protoevangelium 9,2*, also known as *The Infancy Gospel of James*.

2.4 The Late 15th Century and Early 16th Century Milieu

Conventionally, the end of the Middle Ages in Spain is marked by the ascension to the throne of the Catholic Monarchs (1474). Avalle Arce, for instance, actually sustains that the Spanish Renaissance started with Isabella and Ferninand's rule and ended in 1556, after Charles V's reign

(465). As a matter of fact, the Renaissance spirit had already taken root at the University of Salamanca, where both Juan del Enzina and his disciple Lucas Fernández studied and taught. At that time, the Kingdom of Naples was part of the incipient Spanish Empire. Italian influence began to be noticed under the rule of the Catholic Monarchs, and continued with Charles I (also the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, 1516–1556) and his son, Philip II (1556–1598). Enzina himself traveled to Italy on several occasions and was acquainted with the Italian literary trends; he translated Virgil's eclogues, and wrote himself some pastoral secular works. This Italian influence may also be traced in other contemporary writers, such as Lucas Fernández and López de Yanguas.

However, even if their craft is closer to that of the Renaissance, it is evident that the majority of pre-Lope de Vega playwrights, and particularly the ones included in this study, keep up the medieval traditions of biblical drama.[65] Nonetheless, as opposed to the English and French biblical plays, the Spanish works were performed indoors, normally in private houses, and their spectacles were sponsored by members of the nobility. In this sense, the works written by Enzina and his contemporaries are closer to those of Marguerite de Navarre (1492-1549) in that they share the aristocratic audiences for whom their plays were devised. Surtz points out, for instance, that Juan del Enzina and Gil Vicente (1465-ca. 1536) wrote

[65] For a comprehensive catalogue of the dramatic productions in 16th century-Castille, see Miguel M. García-Bermejo Giner. *Catálogo del Teatro Español del siglo XVI: Índice de Piezas Conservadas, Perdidas y Representadas*. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1996.

"self-conscious" plays in the sense that the characters actually express their awareness of the audience witnessing them and, in many cases, they address directly the noble people watching the performance (*Birth of a Theater* 9-13). That is the case in Enzina's *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad*,[66] in which a shepherd acknowledges and flatters the Duchess who is witnessing the play:

> ¡Dios salve acá, buena gente!
> Asmo, soncas, acá estoy,
> que a ver a nuestrama voy.
> ¡Hela, está muy reluziente!
> O la visera me miente
> o es ella sin dudança.
> ¡Miafé! Tráyole un presente
> poquillo y de buenamiente.
> Tome vuestra señorança (ll. 1-9).
>
> TRANS.:
> Hail here, good people!
> I declare, in truth, that I'm here,
> In order to see our mistress.
> There she is, she's stunning!
> If my eyes are not mistaken,
> It is she, no doubt.
> Heavens! I brought her a
> Little good-will present.
> Here you are, your Ladyship.

Enzina's technique was also employed by his contemporary Gil Vicente. In fact, in *Comédia do Viúvo* (1521), a character asks Prince John of Portugal for advice; the assumption is that the Prince was actually in the audience when the play was premiered. These plays are close to Navarre's dramatic practices; her biblical dramas such as *Comédie de la Nativité de*

[66] All quotation to this work are from Juan del Enzina. *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad*. 2002. Cervantes Virtual. Web. 15 May 2008.

Jésus-Christ (ca. 1530) are described as less realistic and less theatrical, privileging hearing over seeing (Mazouer 51).

2.5 Juan del Enzina

Traditionally regarded as the founder or "father" of Spanish drama,[67] Enzina (1468-1529) was a priest, and also a composer, poet and playwright. His fourteen dramatic works mark the transition to the Castilian Renaissance stage. He was probably born in Encina de San Silvestre near Salamanca, hence his name.[68] In 1484 he became chorister at Salamanca Cathedral and attended the University in the same city around the same year. He became *capellán de coro* (chaplain of the choir) at Salamanca Cathedral in 1490, and left University in 1492 to become a member and master of ceremonies at the household of the second Duke of Alba, Don Fadrique de Toledo, where he actually performed his first Christmas eclogue at the Duke's palace in Alba de Tormes.

As said above, even if many of his works stick to the medieval tradition of biblical drama, his craft is closer to that of the Renaissance. As Chase sustains, Enzina was well acquainted with the classics that he studied in Salamanca, which was already a Renaissance hub at the beginning of the 16th century with Nebrija among its faculty:

> It was under the direct influence of Virgil that Encina was led to undertake the composition of those primitive dramatic works that

[67] For a discussion of this appellation, see Surtz, *Birth of a Theater* 13-15.

[68] Né Juan de Fermoselle, but adopted the name Juan del Enzina in 1490 when he became chaplain of the choir at Salamanca Cathedral (Chase 429).

> form the first definite starting-point of the Spanish theatre. He began by paraphrasing Virgil's eclogues, accommodating some of them to contemporary events. It is certain that his interest in Virgil had been awakened by the example of his teacher, Antonio de Nebrija [...] (421).

As Surtz argues, the use of the term "eclogue" in his literary production seems to point to the fact that Enzina and his contemporaries did not deem it appropriate to separate their early plays from their poetry. The proof lies in that he actually published his *églogas* at the end of the *Cancionero* (*Birth of a Theater* 30).

As a musician, he wrote mostly *villancicos*,[69] and added to the genre many innovations. In this sense, the *Oxford Grove Music Encyclopedia* describes Enzina's musical compositions as "featuring varied, flexible rhythms, a transparent polyphonic texture, expressive harmonies, syllabic word-setting and smooth melodies" ("Juan del Encina"). In addition, he is thought to have composed many other religious pieces which are now lost.[70] In 1498 he went back to Salamanca and competed unsuccessfully for the post of choirmaster of the Cathedral, which was given to his rival and former pupil Lucas Fernández. This situation produced a lifelong animosity between the two playwrights, a fact that Enzina seems to have recorded in his *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias* published in the 1507 *Cancionero*.[71] In

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[69] See *villancico* defined in Chapter 7.

[70] For further information on his musical and poetic works see Gilbert Chase. "Juan Del Encina: Poet And Musician." *Music & Letters*, 20.4 (1939): 420-30.

[71] For an analysis of these verses with reference to the dispute with Lucas Fernández, see Andreu Coll Sansalvador. *La Théâtralité dans L'œuvre de Lucas Fernández*. Diss. Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail. Toulouse, 2007. 28-29.

this play, Juan, a character that stands for Enzina himself, suggests that the election was a mere fraud:

> ANTÓN
> Hágante cantor a ti.
>
> RODRIGACHO
> El diabro te lo dará,
> que buenos amos te tienes,
> que cada que vas y vienes
> con ellos muy bien te va [. . .]
> Dártelo an si son sesudos.
>
> JUAN
> Sesudos y muy devotos;
> mas hanlo de dar por botos (ll. 103-15).
>
> TRANS.:
> ANTÓN
> They should appoint you cantor.
>
> RODRIGACHO
> The Devil will appoint you,
> For you have good masters,
> Any time you come and go with them,
> You profit by them [. . .]
> They should appoint you if they are wise.
>
> JUAN
> Wise and very devout;
> But the appointment should be based on votes.

The first edition of his works appeared in 1496 and contained eight plays. It was published in Salamanca under the title *Cancionero de las Obras de Juan del Enzina* and was preceded by a treatise in prose titled "Arte de Trobar" on the state of the poetic art in Spain. *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad* was published in this *Cancionero*, although his *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, which is also part of this study, appeared later in *Cancionero de Todas las Obras de Juan del Enzina con Otras Cosas*

Nueuamente Añadidas, published in Salamanca in 1507. *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad* was preceded by another eclogue, *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad*. In spite of the title, as mentioned above, the latter does not deal with the adoration of the shepherds. Actually, the play's aim was to find the Duke of Alba's patronage. In the full title, which functions as a prologue, the author introduces the characters, two shepherds, Juan and Mateo. It seems pretty clear that Juan stands for Enzina himself and, presumably, he acted this part himself:

> Égloga representada en la noche de la Natividad de nuestro Salvador; adonde se introduzen dos pastores, uno llamado JUAN y otro MATEO. Y aquel que JUAN se llamava entró primero en la sala adonde el Duque y Duquesa estavan oyendo maitines y, en nombre de Juan del Enzina, llegó a presentar cien *coplas* de aquesta fiesta a la señora Duquesa. Y el otro pastor, llamado MATEO, entró después desto y, en nombre de los detratores y maldizientes, començóse a razonar con él. Y JUAN, estando muy alegre y ufano porque sus señorías le avían ya recebido por suyo, convenció la malicia del otro. Adonde prometió que, venido el mayo, sacaría la copilación de todas sus obras, porque se las usurpavan y corrompían y porque no pensasen que toda su obra era pastoril, según algunos dezían, mas antes conociesen que a más se estendía su saber.
>
> TRANS.: Eclogue ennacted on Christmas night on the occasion of the Nativity of our Lord, in which two shepherds are presented, one called Juan, the other Mateo. And the one named Juan entered first in the room where the Duke and the Duchess were attending Matins, and on behalf of Juan del Enzina, he presented to the Duchess one hundred *coplas* dealing with the said feast. And the other shepherd, named Mateo, entered later, and on behalf of the detractors and of those who curse, he began to reason with him. And Juan, happily and confidently because he had already made his lordships aware of the situation, managed to convince them of the other's mischief. There, he promised that in May he would publish all his works because they were being plagiarized and corrupted by others; and in order to prove that not all of his compositions were

> pastoral works, as it was claimed, he was determined to demonstrate that his knowledge was broader.

Some other elements are interesting in order to understand the nature of Enzina's works. First, and unlike most other Castilian plays, in his work the precise performance site and the nature of the audience are revealed. On the one hand, the reader learns that the plays were enacted at the private dwellings of the Dukes of Alba. Second, the link with the Church's liturgy is confirmed, for this piece, and presumably the other Nativity play that followed, were enacted on Christmas Day. The fact that the Divine Office (Matins) is alluded to is also thought-provoking. Apart from revealing that he was a master of flattery, Enzina's words also show that he had a high sense of his own worth and reputation. As he himself remarks, this may be the reason why other—presumably Fernández and Yanguas—were plagiarizing his works, which he claims could not only be reduced to eclogues.[72]

Apart from the Adoration of the Shepherds, his religious eclogues deal with subjects such as the Passion and Death of Christ, as well as the Resurrection. That is the case of *Representación de la Passión y Muerte de Nuestro Redentor* and *Representación a la Santíssima Resurrección de Cristo*, both included in the 1496 *Cancionero*. On the other hand, his secular pastoral eclogues such as *Égloga de Fileno, Zambardo y Cardonio* (1509) or *Égloga de Plácida y Vitoriano* (1513), are mainly based on unrequited love.

[72] An analysis of the term "égloga" as used by Enzina and Fernández is provided below.

2.6 Lucas Fernández

Lucas Fernández (1474-1542) was a composer, dramatist, professor of music at the University and cantor at the Cathedral of Salamanca—a post which, as said above, Enzina wished for himself. Apart from that, he was a member of the Faculty Council, and also an abbot, priest and administrator in a monastery. His plays were recorded in a single 1514 edition entitled *Farsas y Églogas al Modo y Estilo Pastoril y Castellano*. Fernandez's contribution to Spanish drama includes three secular plays, *Comedia en Lenguaje y Estilo Pastoril*, *Farsa o Quasi Comedia*; and a song-drama titled *Diálogo para Cantar*. He also wrote three biblical works, namely, the two Nativity scenes included in this study and a Passion Play, *Auto de la Pasión*.[73]

Thanks to the works of Lihani, Maurizi, Coll Sansalvador, and García-Bermejo Giner, the Salmantine playwright finally achieved his rightful place among his contemporaries. Lihani describes his Nativity scenes *Égloga o Farsa del Nascimiento de Nuestro Redemptor Jesucristo* and *Auto o Farsa del Nascimiento de Nuestro Señor Iesu Christo* as having a humanistic intent (*Lucas Fernández* 112). In fact, a hermit named Macario in the first play and a shepherd called Juan in the other replace the angel of the liturgical tradition while they debate on some intricate theological questions regarding the Birth of Jesus, a clear development first introduced by Fray Íñigo in his *Coplas*. Lihani describes the Passion play as "Fernandez mas-

[73] For further details on his plays, see Alfredo Hermenegildo. *Renacimiento, Teatro y Sociedad: Vida y Obra de Lucas Fernández*. Madrid: Cincel, 1975.

terpiece, [...] an intensely emotional drama in which the spectators identify quickly with the religious ritual, and experience the stimulating fervor that is one of the chief objectives" (142). In the secular plays he shows a light-hearted parody of courtly love, which the dramatist uses as a corrective for the excessive sentimentalism of his time.[74]

The influence of Enzina's works on Fernández's plays has been widely acknowledged, starting with the title of their plays. Fernández, just like Enzina, uses the term "égloga" (eclogue) to describe some of his works. Enzina used the term in two of his Nativity Plays: *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad* and *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad*. However, Fernández adds to his Christmas plays the terms "farsa" and "auto." Given that shepherds feature in those plays, "égloga" seems an appropriate term, but the other labels are as problematic in Lucas Fernández as in the whole corpus of pre-Lope de Vega drama, a matter that actually goes beyond the scope of the present study.[75] After analyzing the use of the terms in Fernández's production, García-Bermejo Giner has studied the three terms ("égloga," "farsa," and "auto") in Fernández's production, departing from the classic definitions of eclogue, farce [76] and

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[74] For further information on the profane eclogues and farces, see Juan Miguel Valero Moreno, ed. *Lucas Fernández: Farsas y Églogas Profanas*. Salamanca: Clásicos de Salamanca, 2002. 9-26.

[75] For further reading on the two terms in the title, and on the influence of other playwrights, see Françoise Maurizi. "Aproximación a la Escritura Teatral de Lucas Fernández: La *Égloga o Farsa del Nascimiento* y su Ermitaño en San Ginés." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 76.3 (1996): 299-315.

[76] On the possible influence of Gil Vicente and his use of the term "farsa" see John Lihani. "Personal Elements in Gil Vicente's Auto Pastoril Castellano." *Hispanic Review* 37 (1969): 297-303.

auto,[77] and has come to the conclusion that these labels are loosely employed to designate a theatrical enactment of dramatic pieces. In addition, he claims that the alternative labels were utilized to establish a difference with Enzina's works, given their noteworthy rivalry (45-56).

In turn, Maurizi argues that, as in Enzina's works, the term "égloga" points to the content (a play in which shepherds feature) whereas "farsa," from the French term "farcire" (to stuff) may point to the fact that Fernández's works were performed as interludes, that is, as pieces played between the different parts of a longer play, presumably performed not at Christmas but as part of the Corpus Christi celebrations (300-1). The term "auto" is thornier although, as Hermenegildo points out when comparing Fernández's two Nativity pieces, the clue might be in the tone of the play: "En efecto, el Auto o farsa no es un sermón tan prolijo, y el contenido de la escena cotidiana entre los rústicos no tiene la misma dimensión que en la Égloga; 187" (Actually, Auto o Farsa is not as exhaustive a sermon, and the content of the scene dealing with the rustics' routines does not have the same dimension as that of the Églogas).

As opposed to Enzina's acting circumstances which, as seen above, are unveiled in the title/prologue of *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad*, little is known about the enactment of Fernández's plays. Lihani suggests that the formula added at the end of the title of both *Égolga o Farsa* and *Auto o Farsa*, "*Et incipit feliciter sub correptione sanctae matris ecclessiae*" (And thus it begins under the supervision of the Holy Mother

[77] "[…] a play with a religious or moral subject." ("Auto").

Church), may imply that his dramas were enacted at the Cathedral where the author was a cantor. Mistakenly, this critic adds as evidence the fact that the title also mentions that the final song requires an organ (*Lucas Fernández* 39-40), when in fact "en órgano" (in organum) simply refers to polyphony: "Y finalmente se van todos a le adorar cantando el villancico que en fin es escrito, en canto de órgano" (And finally they all go and worship Him, singing the villancico that is written at the end, in organum).[78] It seems that the expression was a mere formula[79] used to have the consent of the council of canons at the Cathedral of Salamanca for whom the handling of the subject matter and even the terms "farsa" and "égloga" might have been difficult to grasp (García-Bermejo 59-60). Whether the performance took place in the Cathedral or elsewhere remains unsolved.

2.7 Hernán López de Yanguas

Also known as Fernán López de Yanguas (ca. 1487-?), information on this playwright is scarce and often contradictory. What is known today about him derives from the scant bibliographical references he inserted in his works and via some indirect references made by other fellow writers. At the beginning of the 20th century, Kohler, as well as Bonilla and San Martín, started to study his literary production, although an edition of his

78 The question of polyphony is analyzed in Chapter 7.

79 The formula actually appears in subsequent works such as *Auto del Testamento de Cristo*, which starts with a translated version: "Hecho a deboción de la Sancta Yglesia de Toledo que lo mandó componer en el año de 1582." Also, Juan Mejía de la Cerda's *El Auto Sacramental del Juego del Hombre del Licenciado* (1625), has: "Feliciter incipit sub censura et correctione Sanctae Matris Ecclesiae Catholiçe R[o]manae" (quoted in García-Bermejo 60 ft 14).

plays was only carried out by González Ollé in the late 1960s. In recent times, Espejo Surós has issued a re-edition of López de Yanguas's dramatic works.

Five plays are extant, including *Égloga de la Natividad* that is analyzed in this study and that was probably composed between 1503 and 1507. The other ones are *Égloga Real* (1510), *Farsa del Santísimo Sacramento* (1521), *Farsa del Mundo y Moral* (1524), and *Farsa de la Concordia* (1529). There are records of other dramatic works written by him, including a Nativity play, although they are now deemed to be lost (González Ollé xx-xxi). *Égloga de la Natividad* is preserved in two manuscripts, one found in the 19th century at the State Library of Vienna (C. P. 1. A. 18), and another one kept at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, which is thought be a copy of the former (González Ollé xxii-xxiii).[80] He also wrote nine non-dramatic texts such as his *Diálogo del Mosquito* (1521) or *Nunc Dimittis Trovado* (1520).[81]

His dramatic works in general and his Nativity play in particular reflect the clear influence of Juan del Enzina both in the treatment of the subject matter and in the form. However, López the Yanguas, as will be seen below, opens his play when the shepherds are already aware of the Birth of Jesus, and so it does not include a farcical onset. The shepherds, nonetheless, speak *Sayagués* and share their rusticity with their Castil-

[80] On the history of the two manuscripts, see Fernando González Ollé. "Sobre el Texto de la 'Égloga de la Natividad' de Fernán López de Yanguas." *Segismundo: Revista Hispánica de Teatro* 11. 21-22 (1975): 61-65.

[81] On the non-dramatic texts, see González Ollé xv-xx.

ian counterparts. It should also be highlighted that, unlike other plays, the Virgin Mary features as a character, although she speaks but a short number of lines (ll. 440-47). Another major difference is the treatment of Jesus's genealogy, which is here lengthier than in the rest of the plays, as discussed below in Chapter 6.

The play comprises sixty *coplas* plus a final *villancico*. His choice of the term "farsa," as in the case of Lucas Fernández, might also be a method to differentiate his work from that of Enzina's, or as Maurizi states in the case of Fernández's works, the term may point to the fact that these pieces were interludes to be performed as part of larger theatrical productions (300-1). Pérez-Priego, however, seems to suggest that the term "farsa" in the works of López de Yanguas means simply a dramatic representation, and loosely employed in lieu of "auto" (*Ejercicio de Crítica Textual* 169-70).

Chapter 3
Liturgy and the Plays

3.1 Rite and Drama in Medieval England and Castile

It is assumed by most scholars today that there was no evolutionary growth from the so-called liturgical drama to the more representational vernacular plays. That had been the traditional standpoint of historians such as Hardison who claimed that religious ritual was actually the drama of the early Middle Ages.[82] The same applies to Young, who wrote amply on what he calls the "drama" of the medieval Church, a category in which he included all liturgical tropes and para-theatrical events that took place in religious services throughout the year.[83] In the Spanish milieu, historians in this trend include Donovan, who drew the map of "liturgical drama" in Spain,[84] perhaps to balance out the lack of secular plays in Castile before the 15th century.

The 12th century is considered to be the peak in recurrence of "liturgical drama." [85] However, these tropes were in fact a significant part of religious worship which never left the church. They probably co-existed but

[82] O. B. Hardison. *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages: Essays in the Origin and Early History of Modern Drama*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1965.

[83] Karl Young. *The Drama of the Medieval Church*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.

[84] Richard Donovan. *The Liturgical Drama in Medieval Spain*. Toronto: Toronto Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1958.

[85] For an account of dramatic activity in the 12th century, see Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* 25-53.

were not supplanted by biblical plays in general.[86] Both the Mass and the choral chants that took place during the various canonical hours, that is the so-called Divine Office, were conducted in Latin, following the rules set out by the followers of St Benedict, which were only implemented later by the Roman ritual. After the 8th century it became customary to interpolate a special antiphon known as *tropus* or trope which reproduced dramatically a given biblical dialogue, and was related to the Gospel or to the feast that was being celebrated on that particular day. The dramatization—if indeed such an ambitious term may be used—was undertaken by the clerics or monks as part of the mass or as a complement to worship. Those dialogues were sung and might have incorporated some basic body language and movement.[87]

The best known and earliest trope is the *Quem Quaeritis*, an anonymous 9th century work composed for the Easter Office and preserved at the Monastery of St Gall, Switzerland. This trope must have been quite popular as there are many subsequent testimonies of its enactment in other countries. The earliest account of its dramatization comes from England, and is found in the work known as *Regularis Concordia*, written in Latin between 965 and 975 by an Anglo-Saxon Benedictine, St Ethelwood, bishop of Winchester, or by ministers of his circle. The book, which served

[86] In order to disambiguate the different types of dramatic entertainments that existed in the Middle Ages, Normington proposes to approach them through the concept of "performativity." In this sense, by "performance" one may refer to any act that has been self-consciously prepared for deliberate spectatorship (*Medieval English Drama* 22-35).

[87] See, for instance, Eva Castro. *Teatro Medieval: El Drama Litúrgico*. Barcelona: Crítica, 1997.

as an appendix to the *Rule of St Benedict* for Anglo-Saxon monks, reflects the liturgical rites St Ethelwood wished to be observed in England. When he describes the Easter ceremony known as *Depositio* on Good Friday, he includes some explicit stage directions for the performance of the Easter Sepulcher play "for the edification of the faithful" (Donovan 12).

The *Quem Quaeritis* was gradually turned into a really flexible and popular text that was adapted to other feasts such as Christmas or Ascension. At first, the *Quem Quaeritis* gave rise to the different *Visitatio Sepulchri* tropes enacting the visit of the Three Marys to the Holy Sepulcher. That custom rapidly spread throughout Europe. It was then adapted to the Christmas Mass, which gave rise to the *Officium Pastorum*. Other biblical scenes were subsequently attached to the shepherds, and the Christmas celebration gradually achieved the complexity of the Easter tropes. Those scenes included an episode called *Rachel* or *Lamentatio Rachel*, representing the biblical character mentioned in Jeremiah 31:15 and also in Matthew 2:18. An episode on Epiphany followed, the so-called *Officium* or *Ordo Stellae*.

The Nativity and the *Ordo Stellae* gave rise to the *Ordo Prophetarum* (the earliest one dating back to the late llth century), a dramatization of the messianic prophecies. Inspired in the sermon *Contra Iudaeos* (ca. 6th-7th century) erroneously attributed to St Agustine, its main purpose was to prove Jesus's true nature as the Son of God and as the Messiah prophesized in the Old Testament (Castro 202-207).[88] On the other hand, the "Quem

[88] See Chapter 6 for more details on the prophetic accounts in the plays.

cernitis ascendisse super astra, o Chisticolae?" became the formula used for Ascension Day, celebrated on the fortieth day after Easter (Hidalgo et al. 16).

The study carried out by Young is perhaps the most detailed analysis of the medieval liturgical texts dealing with the biblical *pastores*.[89] The trope known as the *Officium Pastorum* seems to have evolved from the liturgical texts designed for Easter Day, using the *Quem Quaeritis* as a pattern (Rodrigo Mancho 166). The first *Officium Pastorum* is an llth century text from Limoges, France. The Easter dialogue "Quem quaeritis in sepulchro, Christicolae?" (Whom do ye seek in the sepulcher, O followers of Christ) was turned into the following Christmas text, which was also attached to the introit of the Mass:[90]

> AD DOMINICAM MISSAM
>
> Quem queritis in presepe, pastores, dicite?
>
> *Saluatorem Christum Dominum, infantem pannis inuolutum, secundum sermonem angelicum.*
>
> Adest hic paruulus cum Maria matre sua, de qua dudum uaticinando Isaias dixerat propheta: Ecce uirgo concipiet et pariet filium; et nunc euntes dicite quia natus est.
>
> *Alleluia, alleluia!*
>
> Iam uere scimus Christum natum in terris, de quo canite omnes cum propheta, dicentes:
>
> Psalmus: Puer natus est (Young vol. 2: 4).
>
> TRANS.:
> AT SUNDAY MASS
>
> Whom do you seek in the Manger, shepherds, say?

[89] For a detailed information on dates and location of the medieval *Officium Pastorum* manuscripts, see Young vol. 2: 3-28.

[90] Italics by the author; they mark the shepherds' responses.

> *The Savior Christ the Lord, the child wrapped in swaddling clothes, just as the angel said.*
>
> Present here is the little one with Mary, His Mother, of whom Isaiah the prophet foretold: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a son; and now as you go forth, announce that he is born.
>
> *Hallelujah, hallelujah!*
>
> Now we know truly, Christ is born into the world, about whom sing ye all, saying with the prophet:
>
> Psalm: a child is born unto us.

The indebtedness to the *Quem Quaeritis* is clear and, actually, a close comparison of the verses reveals the imitation. The sentences in italics correspond to the *Officium Pastorum*:

> Quem quaeritis in sepulchro, o Christicolae?[91]
>
> *Quem quaeritis in praesepe, pastores, dicite?*
>
> Jesum Nazarenum crucifixum.
>
> *Salvatorem Christum Dominum.*
>
> Non est hic.
>
> *Adest hic.*
>
> Ite, nuntiate quia surrexit.
>
> *Nunc euntes dicite quia natus est* (Young vol. 2: 5).

However, there is a significant difference with regard to the *Visitatio Sepulchri* text that had served as a model. The shepherds, like the Three Marys,

[91] Trans. of the Quem Quaeritis lines:

> [Question]
> Whom do ye seek in the sepulcher, O followers of Christ?
> [Response]
> Jesus of Nazareth, the Crucified.
> [Response]
> He is not here;
> Go, announce that he is risen from the sepulcher.

are interacting with other speakers, although there is no reference whatsoever to the identity of the other interlocutors in the texts. Young, under the light of later versions of the *Officium Pastorum* suggests that the people with whom they are conversing might be midwives (*obstetrices*), that is, the apocryphal characters who appear in relation to Mary's virginity, for instance, in the 2nd century *Greek Gospel of James* and in the 4th century Latin translation of the text that appears in the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* (Young vol 2: 5-6), although there is no such conversation between the shepherds and the midwives in any of these apocryphal texts.

The *Officium Pastorum* texts from the 11th century to the 13th century show some differences among themselves and add new elements to the original one but, still, they may be not regarded as proper dramas. An interesting development of the biblical *pastores* comes from the 13th century *Christmas Plays* from *Benediktbeuern* found within the Latin *Carmina Burana*.[92] The shepherds appear in the same scene as the Magi, who are referred to as "Reges." The kings are overwhelmed by the star that shines up in the skies and are challenged by Herod's messengers. Then, the herdsmen appear and listen to the angel's message which convinces them that they should go and worship Baby Jesus. They are even tempted by a devil but finally proceed to the Manger after a group of heavenly beings sing *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*. On their way back home, they come across the Three Kings and they tell them about what they have seen (see Young

[92] For an edition of the work, see for instance Juan Antonio Estévez Sola, ed. *Carmina Burana: Antología*. Alianza Editorial, 2006.

vol. 2: 188). Interestingly, there is a secular play by Gil Vicente, *Auto de los Reyes Magos* (1503), which also blends the shepherds and the Magi. It is worth noting as well that in Marguerite de Navarre's *Comédie de la Nativité de Jésus-Christ* (ca. 1530) the Devil interacts with the shepherds and, as in the *Carmina Burana*, he tries to tempt them.

Generally speaking, apart from the characters, the elements the *Officium Pastorum* trope shares with the secular plays are not many besides the doctrinal message of salvation. The liturgical texts show no intention of dramatization or mise-en-scène, unless the altar itself is taken to stand for the Holy Manger. In those secular plays in which there is an encounter with the Holy Family, namely, in the English plays, and in the works by Gómez Manrique, Fray Íñigo and López de Yanguas, the shepherds are never asked by other characters on what they seek at the stable. In these plays, the shepherds learn the details of the Birth through an angel and the worship scene takes place. In the rest of the plays, that is, those by Enzina and Fernández, the adoration scene does not even take place, and the shepherds only announce their intention to travel to Bethlehem but they never meet Jesus.

Only two works show some connections with the *Officium Pastorum* trope. One of them is *The Shrewsbury Officium Pastorum*, whose title, as explained above, was provided by one of its editors. Towards the end of the play, the text employs the Latin formula "Saluatorem, Christum Dominum, infantem pannis inuolutum, secundum sermonem angelicum" (after l. 38) which is the answer to the question "Quem quaeritis in prae-

sepe, pastores, dicite?," although the question itself is not included in the extant text.[93] In addition, Fray Íñigo's *Coplas* also seem to echo the Latin trope, although not this version, but some later re-elaborations which included the "Quem uidistis, pastores, dicite?" This question is found in several tropes dealing with the Magi and Herod throughout Europe. In these works, the shepherds are interrogated by the Magi or other people as they return from Bethlehem. The words were basically sung antiphonally and several people (clergymen) were involved.[94] The shepherds are interrogated by the Magi or other people as they return from Bethlehem. This formula was reserved for Lauds, unlike the "Quem quaeritis in praesepe, pastores, dicite?" which was used at Christmas Matins.[95] In any case, as Stern points out, the "in praesepe" version was not the common one in Spanish cathedrals, which seemed to reserve the shepherds' trope for Lauds and had a *Cantus Sybillae*[96] at Matins (*Nativity Celebrations* 209).

Interesting examples of the Lauds office from church records in León, Segovia, Salamanca and Toledo have been recently recorded by Pérez-

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[93] This line was sung antiphonally. For a full analysis of the music in this work see Chapter 7.

[94] For further information on the Magi and the Slaughter of the Innocents, see Young vol 2: 29-124.

[95] For an account of the service books which contain this Lauds formula see Young vol. 2: 18-28.

[96] This trope dates back to the 10th-11th century The prophecy appears in an acrostic poem in Greek attributed to Eusebius of Caesarea and later translated into Latin by St Augustine in *The City of God*. It is found from the 10th century in different churches and cathedrals across Catalonia, Italy, Castile, and France in the sermon *Contra Iudaeos*, later inserted into the reading of the sixth Lesson of the second Nocturn of Matins and was performed as an integral part of liturgy. On this trope see for instance María del Carmen Gómez Muntané. "La Canción de la Sibila." *Revista de Música Antigua* 12 (2000): 48-63.

Priego (*Teatro Medieval* 17-30) and Cátedra.[97] For instance, there is a shepherds' trope in vernacular from the Cathedral of Toledo, dated ca. 1580. Apart from introducing some innovations, the text shows that the liturgical tropes coexisted with the secular plays:

> En aviendo dicho la *postcomunicanda* [de la misa del Gallo], comensarán los caperos la primera antífona de laudes y proseguirán con ellas como es costumbre. Entre tanto que se dizen, se yrán todos los clerizones, salvo los que syrven, a su escuela, y vestir se an como pastoréeos [. . .] Y allí andarán riendo y saltando de una parte a otra. [. . .] y en estando allí, cantarán los caperos el villancico siguiente, a el qual responderá todo el choro:
>
> Bien bengades, pastores,
> hé, que bien vengades!
> Pastores del ganado,
> dezidnos buen mandado.
> ¡Que bien vengades!
> Pastores, do andubistes
> dezínos lo que vistes.
> ¡Que bien vengades![98]
>
> TRANS.: Once the Postcommunion prayer [of the Midnight Mass] has concluded, the choir assistants shall start the first antiphon of Lauds and shall proceed with them as usual. Meanwhile, all choir boys shall leave, save those who are serving their schools, and shall put on shepherds' outfits. And there they shall laugh and hop all over the place [. . .] and once there, the choir assistants shall sing the following villancico, and the rest of the choir shall reply:
>
> Welcome, shepherds,
> Hi, welcome!
> Shepherds of livestock,
> Tell us the news.
> Welcome!
> Shepherds, where were you,

[97] See Pedro M. Cátedra. *Liturgia, Poesía y Teatro en la Edad Media*. Madrid: Gredos, 2005.

[98] For the complete text see Cátedra, *Actas del XIII Congreso de Hispanistas* 3-28.

Tell us what you saw.
Welcome!

Unlike the *Shrewsbury* piece, Fray Íñigo does not include direct material from the liturgical *Officium*, but one of his herdsmen recounts all he has seen and heard as it happens in the trope:

Cuenta el un pastor todo lo que avía visto
El uno dixo en consejo:
«¡O, si vieras, hi de Mingo,
nieto de Pascual el Viejo,
en un pobre portalejo
lo que oímos el domingo;
con los cantares que oí
tan huerte me aquellotrava
que, juro al poder de mí,
del gasajo que sentí
el ojo me reilava (*copla* 150).

TRANS.:
A shepherd recounts all he had seen
One of the said in a meeting:
"O, I wish you had seen, Mingo's son,
And Old Pacual's grandson,
What we heard on Sunday
In a poor stable;
The songs I heard,
They were so intense that made me feel excited,
I swear, for goodness sake,
I felt so much mirth,
That my eye started to twitch.

The source for the liturgical "Quem vidistis, pastores, dicite?" and for Fray Íñigo's scene, seem to be Luke 2:20: "Et reversi sunt pastores glorificantes et laudantes Deum in omnibus quae audierant et viderant sicut dictum est ad illos" (And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them). If the

"in praesepe" version was adapted for recital not at the *praesepe* (manger) or stable, the "uidistis" implies that the exchange takes place at somewhere on the way back from Bethlehem, a point which, with the exceptions mentioned above, most plays do not actually reach.

Nonetheless, both the formula for Matins and the one for Lauds highlight that the shepherds were the first eyewitnesses of Jesus's Birth and the first spokesmen of his salvific message. Furthermore, an element which most plays and the *Officium Pastorum* share and has been overlooked is the reference to Jesus as the Messiah announced by the prophets. In fact, most English and Castilian plays contain abundant prophetic and typological material which is fully analyzed below in Chapter 6.

3.2 Liturgy as Drama

It could be argued that the relationship between drama and liturgy is essentially asymmetrical.[99] The development of secular vernacular plays from liturgy via liturgical drama should rather be envisaged as a historical development that critic Granger accurately describes as "cross-fertilization," that is, liturgy used dramatic techniques and drama included diverse liturgical material to achieve specific goals respectively (22-29).[100]

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[99] From an anthropological perspective, it is not easy to draw boundaries between ritual (i.e. rite) and drama. For instance, Ashley argues that "both cycle plays and rituals may be considered 'cultural performances"' (128).

[100] On the categories theater, drama, religious service and ritual in the Middle Ages, see also Richard McCall. *Do This: Liturgy as Performance*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007. 1-17, 41-77.

Latin was the language of liturgy in the Middle Ages and there are many instances of liturgical phraseology in the plays in such a way that they become important parts of the speeches, and even influence the dramatic action. As will be discussed below in Chapter 7, the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, which is present is most shepherds' dramas, is liturgical and not the one mentioned in Luke 8: 13-14. Other examples include the singing of part of the Creed in Lucas Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa*. Nonetheless, whether Latin as a language was privileged over the vernacular is an area under discussion and debate which has continued since the Middle Ages. In fact, the liturgical texts such as the *Gloria* are often paraphrased in English or Spanish. Conventionally, Latin used to be regarded as the superior, formal language of authorized religion, of the law and of the sciences and the universities.

Conversely, the assumption is that ordinary speech and less serious matters were formulated in the vernacular.[101] Nonetheless, it should be noted that the vernacular was certainly employed by the medieval Church in many areas, and the biblical plays, which were written by religious people, are but one example. For instance, according to Morey, a common misconception is to think that in the Middle Ages English was the silenced language or that "throughout Christendom, the Catholic Church relentlessly suppressed any attempt to make Scripture accessible to lay folk" (24). During the 14th and 15th century, more and more important works were being translated into the vernacular languages, in order to reach a broader

[101] On the use of Latin and vs. vernacular, see Granger 30-34.

audience; the following quote by 14th century English poet Robert Mannyng[102] may justify the authors' intentions: "For lewed men y undyr toke | On englyssh tonge to make þys boke" (quoted in J. Davis 42). It is interesting that the author decides to write this book in English for "lewed," i.e., unlearned, people. "þys boke" is a penitential, that is, "a book containing in codified form the canons of the Church on the hearing of confessions and the imposition of appropriate penances; a manual for priests hearing confessions" ("Penitential").

It is worth mentioning a controversial anonymous 15th century text debating on the translation of the Bible into English by an unknown author:

> If this blessid dede be aloued to the kynge [Oswald] of al hooli chirche, how not now as wel aughte it to be alowed a man to the gospel on Engliche and do therafter? [...] Though a clerke or another man thus lerned can sette his wordis on Engliche better than a rewde man it foloweth not herof that oure langage schuld be destried [would be impaired] (quoted in Wogan-Browne et al. 147).

Whether Latin was a barrier between the texts and the faithful has been a matter of old and recent discussion. A vast number of people would have been illiterate in the sense that they were unable to read or write. However, according to Krug, an anti-intellectual, lay-led, Carthusian spirituality held that the faithful who could not make out the Latin entirely, could nevertheless understand God's words if they "listened" with their hearts

[102] For further information on Mannyng's work see A. M Scott. "'For lewed men y vndyr toke on englyssh tonge to make this boke': Handlyng Synne and English Didactic Writing for the Laity." Ed. Juanita Feros Ruys. *What Nature Does not Teach: Didactic Literature in the Medieval and Early-Modern Periods*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2008. 377-400.

(98). Krug cites as an example the case of Margaret Beaufort (1443-1509), who apparently regretted not having learnt Latin as a young woman, and so she commissioned from printer Caxton, among other things, a bilingual book of prayers, which suggests that she "saw the act of speaking/reading the prayers at least as significant as the linguistic meaning" (66, 99-100).

Another well-known example is the 15th century manual of religious instruction written by John Mirk (ca.1382–ca.1414), which was actually intended for parish priests. The author highlights the importance of language when referring to the emergency baptism of newly-born infants in mortal danger, by midwives or other such people:

> Say ryȝt thus and do no more,
> For non othere kynnes lore:
> I folowe the, or elles I crystene þe, in the nome of
> The fader and þe sone and the holy gost. Amen.
> Or elles thus, Ego baptizo te. N. In nomine patris
> et filij et spiritus sancti. Amen.
> Englysch or latyn, whether me seyþ,
> Hyt suffyseth to the feyth (ll.125-32) (quoted in Mirk 9).

The assumption is that people could, and in all probability did learn their prayers by means of repletion whether in Latin or English, and so the sacrament would have been internalized regardless of the language chosen. It is interesting to note that the theory that Latin did not necessarily entail a barrier has been put into practice in present-day adaptations in order to ascertain to what extent the use of the Church's language affected the understanding and enjoyment of medieval plays. That is the case of the 1998 production of *The York Cycle* on pageant wagons in the streets of York, in which several Latin set pieces were sung to plainsong during the course of

the performance; also, in the South African version of the Mysteries, performed in 2002 and 2003, the performers spoke in their native tongue and occasionally in Latin.[103]

Dillon, for instance, mentions *Piers Plowman* (written ca. 1360–87) as a good example of how it was possible to merge reverence for the sacraments, liturgy and scripture in Latin with the necessity to increase, develop, and teach in the vernacular (20). This critic also mentions the French *Jeu d'Adam* (mid-12th century), *The N-Town Mary Play* and *The Shrewsbury Fragments* as examples in which Latin and English are mixed and actually describe them as "more truly macaronic than Latin or vernacular" (31). Although the importance of Latin in the Castilian and in the English vernacular plays is undeniable, perhaps Dillon's definition of the plays as "macaronic" is somewhat exaggerated since, in essence, the plays are written in the vernacular even if some Latin formulas have been interpolated. In both traditions, the playwrights—clergymen—demonstrate that they were skilled in Latin and mastered the liturgical texts, both monastic and parochial, and that they certainly used liturgy in the plays in different ways, often to achieve particular catechetical goals. One of the most straightforward aims is, certainly, to show the character's redeemed nature and their compliance with the Church.

Nonetheless, the playwrights in their works go beyond the mere interpolations of direct quotes from liturgical texts and add versified transla-

[103] For specific details on these and other modern productions see Katie Normington. *Modern Mysteries: Contemporary Productions of Medieval English Cycle Dramas*. Cambridge, DS Brewer, 2004.

tions of the Latin sources—whether canonical or apocryphal—which they consulted in the original Latin or in Middle English paraphrases (Ridruejo and Portillo 153-58). As Fletcher puts it when analyzing the Joachim and Anna pageant, "Even if [the author] had the Legenda open before him as he composed, he used verbatim translation very sparingly" (167). As will be discussed in the following chapters, translations or even re-elaborations of the liturgical material is also found in most shepherds' plays. The paraphrase of the *Gloria* in the vernacular is the most evident example found in both the English and the Castilian practice.

The plays' insistence on typology and prophecy[104] also mirrors the specific nature of the Latin texts set aside for the Advent and Christmas seasons, respectively. As a matter of fact, these liturgical texts tend to resort to typology, which in Christian theology and biblical exegesis is a doctrine or theory in relation to the prognostic relationship of the Old Testament to the New Testament. That is, events, individuals or statements in the Old Testament are regarded as types prefiguring or superseded by antitypes, which are in turn events or features that have to do directly with Christ or with His revelation, as described in the New Testament. Thus, the Advent period could be roughly divided into two thematic parts. The liturgical texts set aside for the Divine Office in the Breviary and in the Missal during the first part of the season have a clear eschatological orientation, and focus on the Lord's coming at the end of

[104] See Chapter 6.

time (First Sunday of Advent) and on John the Baptist (Second and Third Sunday).

The second part of the season, on the other hand, focuses on the events that prepare immediately for the Birth (Fourth Sunday). The Old Testament readings include prophecies about the Messiah and the Messianic age,[105] especially from Isaiah. As far as weekdays are concerned, the Gospel texts during the first weeks are excerpts from Matthew and Luke; the Old Testament readings are, generally speaking, taken from the book of the prophet Isaiah. During the last week, the Gospel readings cover sequentially Matthew 1 and Luke 1, whereas, the first readings are selected thematically from various prophetic books of the Old Testament. During the weekdays from December 17 to December 24, the so-called "O Antiphons" which highlight the different titles of the long-awaited Messiah derived from prophetical accounts.[106]

3.3 Other Liturgical Elements in the Plays: Prescriptions and Imagery

The Church and its faithful are guided by a cyclic calendar which revolves around two main periods of time, namely, Advent (four weeks) and Lent (forty days), and moves towards its two most important feasts, Christmas and Easter. Those feasts commemorate the life and death of

[105] "[…] The Messianic age is characterised by righteousness, justice and peace, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and by the restoration and renewal of God's people and of creation. In the N[ew] T[estament], the idea appears in a developed form as the 'kingdom of God,' inaugurated by the first coming of Jesus Christ and to be consummated at his return." "Messianic Age."

[106] In Lucas Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa* the author even uses the model of O Antiphons and re-interprets them. See Chapter 7 for further details.

Jesus and include a message of salvation and the promise of eternal life. Normington notes, for instance, that Catholic belief shaped how people behaved both in their daily life and throughout the entire year. In this sense, she mentions five pivotal elements which were central to the beliefs of people, namely, concerns with salvation and the achievement of eternal bliss, redemption through the absolution of sins, meditation through prayer, the relevance of the sacrament (the Eucharist especially), and the conception of an omnipotent God (*Medieval English Drama* 5). All these elements are certainly present in biblical dramas, for they had a marked didactic purpose apart from providing entertainment.

The indebtedness of the plays to liturgy, namely, to the texts used during Advent and Christmas both in the Missal and in the Breviary is significant. A close reading of the dramas reveals that in the vast majority of the cases, Castilian and English playwrights recurred to these common liturgical sources, which, as clergymen, they had at hand as they were part of their everyday lives. Thus, as will be seen below, the most recurrent themes and images found both in the onset and in the second part of the plays, namely, the binary darkness and light, the continuous references to food and drink, as well as their complaints about their hardships and distress find their correspondents in the texts chosen by the Church to guide the faithful at these two liturgical moments.

An interesting reflection on the way in which the liturgical calendar influenced people's life is provided by Duffy:

> The Christian calendar determined the pattern of work and rest, fasting and feasting, and influenced even the privacies of the bedchamber, deciding the times of the year when men and women might or might not marry, when husbands and wives might sleep together or must abstain. Everyone, in principle at least, subscribed to the Christian creed. This taught that the world was not a random heap of blind circumstances, a cosmic accident, but that it was a meaningful whole, which had been created out of nothing by a good God (293).

As a matter of fact, the liturgical period of Advent, as it happens during Lent, prescribes fasting as necessary preparation to fully celebrate the Birth of Jesus during Christmastide. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, there is a clear insistence on the necessity of fasting in the plays. The source seems to be the liturgical texts set aside for Advent and Christmas, both in the Roman Missal and in the Breviary to be read at Mass or at the different Canonical Hours. Those texts are particularly insistent on the necessity of fasting. Other liturgical prescriptions are evoked in the plays as well such as the practice of almsgiving, but also some regulations on the use of music and ornamentation as necessary requisites to participate in the commemoration of the Birth of Christ.

In addition, the shepherds' failure to understand the nature of the divine message brought by the angels in many of the plays seems to have a strong connection with their eating practices and with the fact that they seem to ignore the Advent fast. As will be seen below, liturgical texts specifically mention that without proper fasting, God's messages will be inaccessible. Other liturgical issues which are reproduced in the dramas include music and sound and, also, the inclusion of light and darkness imagery

(see Chapter 5). When analyzing the Nativity sequence in *The York Plays*, King points out that the entry of the divine into the postlapsarian human world is recurrently referred to in the Missal, specifically, as a suffusion of light into darkness, a commonplace imagery derived from Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 7:13-14) of the Incarnation (*The York Mystery Plays* 98-101). This light and darkness imagery is present in most dramas, although the Missal is not the only source. In fact, the seasonal texts in the Breviary also abound in images of this kind. In addition, the most fully developed plays, which include an episode prior to the angelic announcement, recreate a gloomy atmosphere by insisting on bad weather, a topic that is also present in the liturgical texts.

Chapter 4
Food, Drink and Presents

4.1 Food and Drink in the Plays

The most fully-developed plays include a somewhat multifaceted scene in which the shepherds eat and drink and, in certain cases, they do so copiously. The specific details of the characters' repast provokes laughter, especially in those plays in which the gastronomic details are substantial, namely, in *The Towneley First Shepherds' Play*, in *The Second Shepherds' Play*, in *The Chester Painters' Playe*, and in Lucas Fernández's and Enzina's works, respectively. The food topic in the English dramas has attracted the attention of a number of critics who have approached the matter from different perspectives, including some religious analyses based on scriptural readings. In particular, these studies relate the type of food the shepherds eat to Old Testament sinful practices. However, a liturgical approach taking into account the Church's prescriptions on fasting and feasting in the liturgical calendar has not been fully examined yet.[107]

Generally speaking, the fondness for eating and drinking manifestly functions as a way to relate the characters to realistic material pleasures. Woolf, for instance, with regard to the English plays suggests that the

[107] For an introduction to the role of food in Western thought, see Deane W. Curtain. "Food/Body/Person." Eds. Deane W. Curtain and Lisa M. Heldke. *Cooking, Eating, Thinking. Transformative Philosophies of Food*. Bloominton: Indiana University Press, 1992. 3-22.

shepherds' practice belongs to a wider tradition in which the characters are depicted as sinners.[108] She offers as an example Jean Michel's *Mystère de la Passion* (ca. 1484) in which the shepherds show their delight on the nights spent with shepherdesses with clear sexual innuendoes (*English Mystery Plays* 186). In this respect, as regards the herdsmen's mood in *Towneley* and *Chester*, Woolf finds some connections with Peter Breughel the Elder's (1525-1569) "Land of Cokayne," a comic picture of the spiritual emptiness believed to derive from two of the seven deadly sins, namely, gluttony and sloth. In this work, a clerk, a peasant farmer, and a soldier lay sleeping on the ground beneath a table with plenty food.[109]

In addition, it should be noted that gluttony tended to be associated with the Jews in the Middle Ages. For instance, Frey explains how the food theme was "shown as a vehicle used by the Christian majority to secure its identity as a group while at the same time marginalizing the Jewish minority" (113).[110] The First Shepherd in *The First Shepherds' Play*

[108] Woolf finds some links with French Nativity dramas and poems and cites 19th century critic Maurice Wilmotte who highlighted "la place vraiment exorbitant qu'y occupent les details gastronomiques" (the truly extraordinary space devoted to gastronomic details) in medieval shepherds' works) (*The English Mystery Plays* 186). In his work, Wilmotte links this practice to the Roman Saturnalia (95). In connection with the Roman Saturnalia, Manly actually refers to a "Saturnalian spirit" of the hungry shepherds when dealing with *The Second Shepherds' Play* (154).

[109] The Middle English poem "The Land of Cokaygne" included in *The Kildare Poems* also deals with this theme, although it depicts a corrupt community of monks (probably the ones dwelling at the Cistercian abbey at Inislounaght, near Waterford), who lead a luxurious, depraved life in the mythical land of Cockaigne. On this poem, see Raymond Hickey. *Irish English: History and Present-Day Forms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 426. See also A. W. Bennett and G. V. Smithers, eds. *Early Middle English Verse and Prose*. Oxford: OUP, 1968. 138-44.

[110] For an account of texts and records which associate gluttony with the Jews in medieval works, see Frey 133-44.

proverbially recognizes his gluttony when he states that the choice of mutton is "Good mete for a gloton" (1. 222).[111] Scholarship has also noted that food in medieval literature serves a class marker. For example, when studying other medieval genres such as romances and *chansons de geste*, Farrier remarks that food functions as a proof of largesse but it also possesses a strong ceremonial value. Thus, the critic points out that feasting marks important events such as weddings or battle victories as, for instance in *King Horn* or in *Prise d'Orange* and *Aliscans*. However, rarely does the writer of a romance or chanson de geste mention hunger, for the reference is often socially marked; thus, hungry characters are usually members of the lower strata or noblemen forced among the peasantry (145). In this sense, the authors of pastoral dramas seem to be reversing this convention, since the ones feasting are humble people belonging to the peasantry and they are not celebrating any important event at all. Their true celebration arrives when they learn about the Messiah, although in all plays the celebration implies music and song,[112] and not feasting.[113]

The meal the shepherds share functions as an ironic vindication of their poor status and hardships. Actually, there are several instances in which those characters who are subordinated to the rest denounce their situation of hunger when compared with that of their masters'. In *The*

[111] Randle Cotgrave's Dictionary under "Mouton" has "Chair de mouton manger de gloulton: Pro. Flesh of a Mutton is food for a glutton; (or was held so in old time when Beefe and Bacon were your onely dainties)." Quoted in Cawley, "The Grotesque Feast" 214. See also Stevens and Cawley vol 2: note to ll. 318-20.

[112] On music, see Chapter 7.

[113] The only moment when the food topic is addressed again is at the gift-giving, when some food items are offered to the baby as it is explained below.

Second Shepherds' Play, for example, Tertius Pastor, who is a servant to the other two, claims that his masters exploit him and that he is hungry and thirsty: "A drynk fayn wold I haue, | And somwhat to dyne" (ll. 211-13). Secundus Pastor lets him know in l. 217 that they have already eaten ("We haue mayde it"), although they finally make up their minds and allow their servant to have some supper: "Yit is he in state | To dyne - if he had it" (ll. 220-21). Then, a starving Third Shepherd recounts how tough his life is when compared to that of his masters', a reference that may be understood as a direct denunciation of the oppression of the lower classes:

> Sich seruandys as I,
> That swettys and swynkys,
> Etys oure brede full dry,
> And that me forthynkys.
> We ar oft weytt and wery
> When master-men wynkys,
> Yit commys full lately
> Both dyners and drynkys (ll. 222-29).

Yet, the Third Shepherd is not the only hungry character in the play. Later on, Mak will specify that he is starving as well: "My belly farys not weyll | It is out of astate[114] (ll. 330-31)."

The question of oppression is actually addressed before in the play, as the shepherds seem to denounce the enclosure issue directly.[115] The First Shepherd complains about how dramatic and oppressive their situation is, and he blames the "gentlery-men" for this. These people did not seem to

[114] Literally "out of condition. State or condition in general, whether material or moral, bodily or mental." "Estate."
[115] See Stevens and Cawley's vol. 2: 495 note ll. 20 and ff.

be the landlords themselves but the stewards or bailiffs who managed the state in the absence of the landlord:

> For the tylthe of oure landys
> Lyys falow as the floore,
> As ye ken.
> We ar so hamyd,
> Foretaxed and ramyd,
> We ar mayde handtamyd
> With thyse gentlery-men (ll. 20-25).[116]

In Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, one of the shepherds scornfully refers to his masters who, unlike himself, live comfortably and keep themselves warm at their private dwellings, while they work hard for them, taking care of their sheep under unbearable conditions: "Cuido que con más cuidado | deven estar nuestros amos; ll. 41-42" (I bet that a better care | is provided to our masters). *Chester* also reflects a context of oppression in the relationship amongst the three shepherds and their boy-servant Garcius, who actually bears a grudge against his masters for he is not getting his wages:

> Nay, the dyrte is soe deepe,
> stopped therm for to steepe;
> and the grubbes theron do creepe
> at whom at thy howse.
> Therfore meate, if I maye,

[116] The enclosure movement was the result of the successful wool market that had begun in the early 14th century. This fruitful trade made many wealthy landlords change to sheep farming in the second half of the 15th century. Landlords found competition with peasants who had grazing rights and were allowed to take their sheep to vast areas of wasteland (Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers 279-81). As a result, the grazing lands were enclosed in order to avoid common use. For further reading on how the pastoral plays reflect this change in the landscape see Vicente Chacón Carmona."Landscape and Environment in Medieval Shepherds' Plays." *European Medieval Drama*, 14 (2010): 137-46.

of your dightinge todaye
will I nought by noe waye
tyll I have my wages.
I wend to have binne gaye
but, see, soe ragged is myne araye;
aye pinches is your paye
to any poore page (ll. 214-25).

The scene devoted to the shepherds' banquet in *The First Shepherds' Play* and in *The Chester Painters' Playe* stands out among the English pieces due to the amount of food—and drink—the characters have. With regard to the former, Cawley highlights the ludicrous nature of the herdsmen' banquet in this play, which actually includes three courses. Interestingly, cookery books from the time show that this number of courses was typical of lordly meals, whereas the menu of the humbler classes would only include a maximum of two.[117] Medieval culinary art works such as John Russell's *Boke of Nurture* (ca. 1460-1470)[118] reveal that both the *Towneley* playwright, as Cawley sustains, and the author of *The Chester Painters' Play* actually mixed high-class and low-class dishes.[119] The direct effect of this assortment seems to be comic, giving rise to a "ludicrous gallimaufry that can never have existed except in his [the author's] imagination" (Cawley, "The Grotest Feast" 215).[120] Actually, the Second Shepherd's words

[117] See T. Austini. *Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books*. London: EETS (OUP), 1888. 63.
[118] The manuscript (MS. 4011.3) was printed by F. J. Furnivall. *Early English Meals and Manners*. Oxford: EETS (OUP), 1868.
[119] On eating habits in the Middle Ages see Terence Scully. "Tempering Medieval Food." Ed. Melitta Weiss Adamson. *Food and Drink in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1995. 155-80.
[120] For further reading on the meal in Towneley, see S. B. Hemingway. *English Nativity Plays*. Eds. Yale Studies in English and Albert S. Cook. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1909. 281. See also M. Carey. *The Wakefield Group in the Towneley Cycle*. Baltimore: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1930. 162.

"we myster no sponys | here, at oure mangyng" (ll. 333-34), that is, that they can manage very well with their fingers, seem to imply that the meal was make-believe, and as such it could be easily eaten without the help of spoons. That the shepherds do not use knives should not be surprising, for this piece of cutlery was not used at the English table before the reign of James I (1603-1625). In his 18th century treatise on the feeding habits of the "Old English," Warner comments:

> the disagreeable custom of feeding with the fingers prevailed till the middle of the seventeenth century [...]. Perhaps, however, the spoon was then more generally used, than it is at present (iii-iv).

Moreover, many of the "delicacies" mentioned by the shepherds in *Towneley* would have never been found in any aristocratic menu. This would also be applicable to the extensive list of dishes in *Chester* or the menus in the Castilian practice. As Cawley puts it, "they are the delicacies of humble folk, and they were never ceremoniously borne" ("The Grotesque Feast" 215). To start with, in place of classy wines, the rustics are happy to drink down their repast with "good ayll of Hely" (l. 352).[121] The herdsmen in *Chester* also prefer ale[122] to wine, although the chosen variety is the one brewed in "Halton" (l. 117).[123]

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[121] Hely is a place name, although the exact location is not clear. For a discussion on "Hely" see, Stevens and Cawley vol. 2: 488.

[122] On the consumption of ale in Europe from the Middle Ages to 1700, see A. Lynn Martin. "Old People, Alcohol and Identity in Europe 1300-1700." Ed. Peter Scholliers. *Food, Drink and Identity: Cooking, Eating and Drinking in Europe since the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Berg, 2001. 119-218.

[123] "A village and manor approximately ten miles north-east of Chester" (Lumiansky & Mills vol 2: 107 note to l. 117).

As regards the food items in *The First Shepherds' Play*, the lengthy list includes mostly fleshy goods such as "browne of a bore" (l. 212),[124] "The pestell [leg] of a sowe" (l. 216), "moton | Of an ewe that was roton" (ll. 220-21), that is, mutton of a sheep that had died of rot,[125] "blodyngis" or blood puddings, a "leueryng," i.e., liver sausage. (l. 217), and "All a hare bot the lonys."[126] With respect to the kinds of food listed, Lepow sustains that the meal's variety, besides being comic and playful, is also theologically meaningful, for most fleshy goods mentioned are defined as "unclean" according to the Old Testament (280-83). Actually, nine out of the eleven dishes that appear in the shepherds' meal are listed as "abominations" in Leviticus 11 and prohibited by the injunction against eating blood in Genesis 9:4. Such excluded meats include pork meat (including swine and the like), which abounds in their meal, or other sub-products such as their blood, which the shepherds also ingest for instance when they consume blood pudding, as has been seen above. The biblical prohibition includes the flesh of dead animals or parts of them that died due to disease, and the shepherds actually eat mutton of a sheep that dies of rot (ll. 220-21).

[124] The boar's head is a traditional Christmas delicacy and is celebrated in many a carol, but it could also be the first item of a flesh meal at other times of the year. See Cawley, "The Grotesque Feast" 213.

[125] "Any of several parasitic diseases especially of sheep marked by necrosis and wasting." ("Rot").

[126] Everything from the hare but its loins, i.e., its sexual organs"(l. 230). Hare meat is also prohibited in Leviticus 11:6-8 "[…] because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you."

The shepherds in *The Chester Painters' Playe* also eat similar foods which include "bredd" (l. 113), "onyons," (l. 114) "garlycke," (l. 156), "leekes" (l. 157), and also "butter" (l. 115) and "green cheese" (l. 116). Most of the products they consume are also banned in the Old Testament for the aforementioned reasons: "whot meate" (ll. 118, 130), "a puddinge (l. 119) with a pricke[127] in the ende" (l. 132); "a jannock" (l. 120); "a sheepes heade sowsed in ale" (l. 121); "a grayne[128] to laye on the greene" (l. 122); "sower milke" (l. 123); "a pigges foote from puddinges purye" (l. 128); "gambonns" (i.e., smoked or cure hams; l. 131); "tonge" (l. 135); "sowse" (l. 213); "curye" (l. 282); and "cake" (l. 282).

Fernández's herdsmen in *Auto o Farsa* also devise a great—presumably imaginary—repast on stage as well, which again includes banned items of food in the Old Testament:[129]

> Comer, beber; de contino:
> Tassajo, soma y buen vino.
> Comer buenos requesones,
> comer buena miga cocha,
> remamar la cabra mocha
> y comer buenos lechones,
> y castrones y ansarones,
> y abortones, corderitos
> mielgos, chibos y cabritos,
> ajos, puerros, cebollones[130] (ll. 26-35).

[127] A skewer.

[128] Swine snout.

[129] For a history of culinary art in Castile, see for instance Julio Valles Rojo. *Cocina y Alimentación en los Siglos XVI y XVII*. Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 2007. See also María de los Ángeles Pérez Samper. *La Alimentación en la España del Siglo de Oro: Domingo Hernández de Maceras "Libro del arte de cocina."* Huesca: La Val de Onsera, 1998.

[130] Interestingly enough, Secundus Pastor in *The Paintes Playe* also eats "onyons, garlycke, and leekes" (l. 114).

TRANS.:
Eat, drink, non-stop:
meat loaf
Black bread and good wine.
Eat good cottage cheese,
Good cooked breadcrumbs,
Suck [milk] from the blunted goat,
Eat good suckling pigs
And castrated boars and large geese
And animal fetus, little twin lambs
Young and baby goats
Garlic, leeks, and big onions.

The grotesque feast is continued in the following stanza (ll. 28-36). Pascual acknowledges that so much eating and drinking has affected Llorente's senses (his sight) and that he looks crooked. A somewhat tipsy Llorente shows him that he is wrong and comments: "Ya a beber bien alço el codo; l. 108," i.e., he is doing great as he manages to lift his elbow to drink from a bottle. Unlike the English ones, these shepherds drink wine, which they claim to be of a good quality, hence the reference to "buen vino" (l. 27). It is worth noting that there is an interesting approach to the topic of wine in the German play *Erlauer Weihnachtsspiel*,[131] a late 14th-c. piece from Kärnten. This work includes some self-indulgent shepherds who are wine drinkers as well. Curiously enough, it is Joseph who treats the shepherds to some wine. As a matter of fact, Joseph here seems to belong to a literary tradition which includes an old man drinking wine as a symbol of renewal.[132] Thus, old Joseph comes across one of the shepherds who re-

[131] For an edition of the play see Kurt Ruh, ed. *Erlauer Weihnachtsspiel: Die Deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters*. Berlin: Verfasserlexikon, 2007.
[132] See see A. Lynn Martin. "Old People, Alcohol and Identity in Europe 1300-1700" 119-218.

counts how the angels told him about a maiden who would give birth to the king of the world. Joseph clarifies that Mary is in fact the maiden in question and they drink wine together (ll. 1–58). In the same play, the Jews mock Mary and the child in a song. Joseph, however, doesn't seem to hear them and offers some wine to the child as he praises him, singing along in a choir with the angels.[133]

As in the case of the English pieces, most goods consumed by Fernández's herdsmen could be regarded as taboo foods in Old Testament terms: "Tassajo" may refer to any portion of meat, but the following stanza reveals that some of the meat he is thinking of are "lechones" (l. 31), i.e., suckling pigs, "castrones," that is, castrated pigs or goats, and therefore forbidden in the Old Testament. The reason why pork meat is banned is offered in Leviticus 11:6-8: "[. . .] the swine, because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch; they are unclean to you." Also, Deuteronomy 14:21 reads: "You shall not eat anything that dies of itself; you may give it to the alien who is within your towns, that he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; for you are a people holy to the lord your God." Fernández's shepherds actually mention that they eat "albortones" (l. 32), that is, pig fetus, and therefore animals that died before they were born. In this sense, Lepow, with regard to *The First Shepherds' Play*, believes that the insistence and specificity of the "taboo foods"

[133] The author is indebted to Professor Cora Dietl from the University of Gießen, Germany, for providing him with invaluable information on this and other medieval German plays.

actually has a clear purpose on the part of the author, who designed the menu to make a theological point:

> [T]he Old Law is superseded by the New, and the New Law does not exclude but includes; it embraces variety in foods and in peoples as well… The audience is encouraged to see the shepherds as proto-Christians who, like them, inhabit a world in which salvation is possible to all, not just a chosen few (281-82).

It is actually true that in the New Testament all these prohibitions concerning "unclean food" are abolished with St Peter's vision in Acts 10. However, Lepow's doctrinal analysis is not clear, for it is assumed that the shepherds achieve salvation in spite of leading a sinful life without repentance. Furthermore, the plays do not seem to convey the message that by giving up the ingestion of "unclean" food, the encounter with Jesus is granted. Actually, it is not until all references to eating and drinking disappear that the shepherds begin to comprehend the magnitude of the message that is delivered unto them, i.e., that their salvation is at hand after Jesus's Birth. There seems to be an actual clear connection between the shepherds' failure to understand the signs of Jesus's Birth and their eating practices. The answer seems to be purely liturgical, and may be connected with the Advent fast.

4.2 Food and Drink in the Liturgy of Advent and Christmas

There are numerous references to eating and drinking in the liturgical texts set aside for Advent and Christmas, both in the Breviary and in the Missal. There is an important liturgical reason for this thematic

focus: Advent has traditionally been observed as "a season of prayer and fasting" ("Advent") in preparation for Christ's Birth, and it is regarded by the Church as a period of penance for sins, similar to that of Lent. Actually, Advent is also known as St Martin's Lent. Its origins are in the ninth canon of the first Council of Macon (A.D. 582) which ordained that during the interval between St Martin's Day (November 11) and Christmas, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday should be a fasting day, and that the Mass should be celebrated according to the Lenten rite.[134]

In the liturgical cycle of the Church, the season of Advent[135] marks a period of spiritual preparation by the faithful before Christmas. Thus, Advent looks back to a time before the Birth of Christ and then looks forward beyond this event to remind the faithful that Jesus, the Savior, will come again on Doomsday to judge[136] the living and the dead, to defeat the powers of darkness and sin and to establish his kingdom forever. Therefore, the purpose of the Advent period is twofold:[137] on the one hand, it commemorates the coming of Christ to the world through his Incarnation

[134] For more information on St Martin's Lent, see "The History of Advent."

[135] Advent begins on the Sunday closest to the Feast of St Andrew the Apostle (November 30). It entails four weeks, although the last week is usually truncated depending on when Christmas Day falls. See Appendix I.

[136] The emphasis on the double coming (*adventus*) of Jesus starts with the Mass for first Sunday of Advent, also known as Missa 'Ad Te Levavi' for this is how the introit starts. The Epistle is by St Paul (Romans 13:11-14) and the Gospel (Luke 21:25-33) revolve around the urgency to cast off sin to get ready for the coming of Christ as Savior, but also as Judge on Doomsday.

[137] The etymology of the word reflects this double sense: "[. . .] In post-classical Latin also coming of Christ to the world, incarnation, Second Coming of Christ (Vulgate), ecclesiastical season immediately preceding Christmas." (*OED* "Advent").

and Birth in Bethlehem, but it is also a reminder of his Second Coming. Thus, Advent is regarded as a time when:

> [. . .] the faithful are admonished to prepare themselves worthily to celebrate the anniversary of the Lord's coming into the world as the incarnate God of love, thus to make their souls fitting abodes for the Redeemer's coming in Holy Communion and through grace, and thereby to make themselves ready for His final coming as judge, at death and at the end of the world (Mershman "Advent").

In the plays in which the food theme is fully developed, the shepherds are far from being "fitting abodes" before the Annunciation, and so their failure to understand the divine messages seems to be the result of their wrongdoing. The shepherds' eating and drinking practices before the Birth of Jesus are against the admonitions made by the Church through the liturgy of the season. This sinful behavior has as a result an inevitable incapacity to interpret the signs and events that surround the delivery of the message as will be seen below. Thus, the English and Castilian characters, because they stand ambivalently for the biblical shepherds but also for contemporary herdsmen, the assumption is that they are governed by the principles of the liturgical calendar in the same way that the local people watching (or reading) the play were and to whom they were providing catechetical grounding.

The liturgy as of the third week of Advent preceding the fourth Sunday is particularly insistent on the importance of fasting. There are some special days during this week called Ember Days (*Témporas* in Spanish)

in which fasting and abstinence are mandatory.[138] They were arranged and agreed by the whole Church at the Council of Placentia (1095) for the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday (Ember Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, respectively);[139] after December 13 (St Lucy's Day), but also after Ash Wednesday and Whitsunday, and after September 14 when the Exaltation of the Cross is celebrated ("Ember"). The main goals on these days were "to thank God for the gifts of nature, to teach men to make use of them in moderation, and to assist the needy" (Mershman "Ember Days"). The Secret[140] of the Mass on Ember Wednesday is particular insistent on the need of fasting to achieve God's grace: "Accepta tibi sint, quaesumus, Domine, nostra jejunia: quae et expiando nos tua gratia dignos efficiant, et ad sempiterna promissa perducant; *Missale Romanum* 8" (May our fasts, we beseech Thee, O Lord, be acceptable unto Thee, and by expiating our sins, make us worthy of Thy grace, and bring us to Thine everlasting promises).

This emphasis on fasting—including food and drink—is especially highlighted in the Roman Breviary, as the prayers of the Divine Office on the First Sunday of Advent highlight. The text set aside to be recited at Matins during the fourth Lesson, Second Nocturn,[141] is taken from the Sermons of Pope St Leo the Great ("Sermon 8") on the December Fast and almsgiving, which reminds the faithful that, since the Lord's coming is near, it is necessary to fast:

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[138] See Appendix I to locate these days within the Advent Liturgical Calendar.
[139] Spanish *Miércoles*, *Viernes* and *Sábado de Témporas*.
[140] For the parts of the Mass, see Appendix II.
[141] For the different parts of a canonical hour, see Appendix III.

> Cum de adventu regni Dei, et de mundi fine ac temporum, discipulos suos Salvator instrueret, totamque Ecclesiam suam in Apostolis erudiret: Cavete, inquit, ne forte graventur corda vestra in crapula, et ebrietate, et cogitationibus saecularibus. Quod utique praeceptum dilectissimi, ad nos specialius pertinere cognoscimus, quibus denuntiatus dies, etiamsi est occultus, non dubitatur esse vicinus (*Breviarium Romanum* 215).
>
> TRANS.: Our Saviour Himself instructed His disciples concerning the times and seasons of the coming of the Kingdom of God and the end of the world, and He hath given the same teaching to the Church by the mouth of His Apostles. In connection with this subject then, Our Lord biddeth us beware lest we let our hearts grow heavy through excess of meat and drink, and worldly thoughts. Dearly beloved brethren, we know how that this warning applieth particularly to us. We know that that day is coming, and though for a season we know not the very hour yet this we know, that it is near.

Nonetheless, the shepherds' behavior is contrary to what the sermon specifically prescribes, that is, they actually rejoice in the consumption of "an excess of meat and drink" and their minds are clearly focused on "worldly thoughts." Similarly, the fifth Lesson, in the responsory, insists on this idea: "Ad cujus adventum omnem hominem convenit praeparari: ne quem aut ventri deditum, aut curis saecularibus inveniat implicatum; *Breviarium Romanum* 216" (Let every man then make himself ready against the coming of the Lord, so that He may not find him making his belly his god, or the world his chief care). The sixth Lesson links gluttony to idleness and leisure which are three elements linked in the dramas. This *Lectio* actually centers upon the idea that the soul cannot be free unless "fleshy cravings" are abandoned and the mind is set on holy thoughts (*Breviarium Romanum* 135).[142]

[142] See section 4.4 for a discussion of this *Lectio*.

The need to stop eating is directly recommended to the sinful shepherds in Enzina's *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad* (ll. 136-44), in which they are specifically told to stop eating earthly food since their eternal nourishment has arrived:

> ¡Hartar, hartar ya, gañanes,
> Qu'es venido pan del cielo,
> pan de vida y de consuelo!
> No comáis somas de canes,
> ni andéis hechos albardanes
> comiendo vianda vil,
> que Aquéste con cinco panes
> hartará más rabadanes
> que otro con cinco mil (ll. 136-44).
>
> TRANS.:
> Stop, stop eating, you boors,
> That from Heaven has come
> The bread of life and comfort!
> Don't eat dog's bread
> And stop behaving as buffoons
> While you eat evil meat.
> For He with five breads
> Will feed more shepherds
> Than anyone with five thousand.

The indebtedness of these lines to the liturgical texts is evident, and may be also inspired in John 6:51, which describes Jesus as "[...] the living bread which came down from heaven" and adds that "if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." These lines also recall Jesus's miracle, when He fed the multitude. Actually, the feeding of the five thousand people with five breads is a direct reference to so-called "miracle of the five loaves and the two fish," which is the only miracle—apart from the

Resurrection—which is told in all four canonical Gospels: Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:10-17 and John 6:5-15.[143]

The introduction to Lucas Fernández's *Auto o Farsa* already summarizes the most important ideas which the Advent and Christmas liturgical times entail. Fenández explains:

> [...] Y en fin, acordándose de aquel proverbio común, que suelen dezir que todos los duelos con pan son buenos,[144] acuerda de almorzar, y porque mejor le sepa, llama a su compañero LLOREYNTE, el qual falla dormiendo, y lo despierta. Y después, oluidados del almuerzo, imbentan algunos juegos, los quales le estorba el tercero pastor, llamado JUAN, el qual les viene a contar con gran alegría el nascimiento [...].
>
> TRANS.: [...] And finally, as he remembers the common proverb that recalls that sorrows great are lessened with bread,[145] he agrees on having lunch, and to make it more profitable, he calls his friend Lloreynte, who is sleeping. So he goes and wakes him up. And later on, once lunch is forgotten, they devise some games, which the Third Shepherd, named Juan, interrupts as he comes to recount so happily about the Birth [...].

The shepherds in this play clearly combine gluttony and idleness instead of taking care of their flocks. However, it is clearly indicated that the message is delivered and their spiritual awakening takes place only when they forget about their meal and stop their games. All these practices—eating, sleeping and remaining idle—according to the liturgical readings, should be avoided in order to receive God's wisdom.

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[143] The Feeding of the 4,000 people, also known as "the miracle of the seven loaves and fish" is reported by Mark 8:1-9 and Matthew 15:32-39 but not by Luke or John.

[144] A version of "los duelos con pan, son menos," i.e., sorrows are lessened with bread. See "Los duelos con pan, son menos."

[145] The original proverb in English is "sorrows great are lessened with meat." It is found, for instance, in Shelton's (1620) translation of *Don Quixote* in Part II, Chapter 55: 105 (Shelton).

During the third week of Advent and the celebration of the Ember Days, the Breviary is insistent on the necessity of fasting as a compulsory preparation for the coming of Jesus. The admonitions on the third Sunday, also known as Rose Sunday, are significant and start with the fourth Lesson of the second Nocturn. The text is taken from the Second Sermon of Pope St Leo the Great, "De jejunio decimi mensis et collectis" (Second on the December Fast, and Almsgiving):

> Quod temporis ratio, et devotionis nostrae admonet consuetudo, pastorali vobis, dilectissimi, sollicitudine praedicamus, decimi mensis celebrandum esse jejunium, quo pro consummata perceptione omnium fructuum, dignissime largitori eorum Deo continentiae libamen offertur. Quid enim potest efficacius esse jejunio? cujus observantia appropinquamus Deo, et resistentes diabolo, vitia blanda superamus (*Breviarium Romanum* 153).
>
> TRANS.: With the care which becometh us as the shepherd of your souls, we urge upon you the rigid observance of this December Fast. The month of December hath come round again, and with it this devout custom of the Church. The fruits of the year, which is drawing to a close, are now all gathered in, and we most meetly offer our abstinence to God as a sacrifice of thanksgiving. And what can be more useful than fasting, that exercise by which we draw nigh to God, make a stand against the devil, and overcome the softer enticements of sin.

Later, during the fifth Lesson at Matins, fasting, which is presented as "the bread of strength" is envisaged as a necessary requisite if pure or holy thoughts are to be achieved:

> Semper enim virtuti cibus jejunium fuit. De abstinentia denique prodeunt castae cogitationes, rationabiles voluntates, salubriora consilia: et per voluntarias afflictiones caro concupiscentiis moritur, virtutibus spiritus innovatur. Sed quia non solo jejunio animarum nostrarum salus acquiritur: jejunium nostrum misericordiis paupe-

> rum suppleamus. Impendamus virtuti, quod subtrahimus voluptati. Fiat refectio pauperis abstinentia jejunantis (*Breviarium Romanum* 153).
>
> TRANS.: Fasting hath ever been the bread of strength. From abstinence proceed pure thoughts, reasonable desires, and healthy counsels. By voluntary mortifications the flesh dieth to lust, and the soul is renewed in might. But since fasting is not the only mean whereby we get health for our souls, let us add to our fasting works of mercy. Let us spend in good deeds what we take from indulgence. Let our fast become the banquet of the poor.

However, the Lesson clarifies that "fasting is not the only mean whereby we get health for our souls" but it is also necessary to do "works of mercy," because people's fast will "become the banquet of the poor." This concern may explain the shepherds' determination to offer their gifts to the child later on in the dramas, as will be seen below. The same idea is repeated in the sixth Lesson, which again directly refers to this third week of Advent as a strict fasting time, with special emphasis on the Ember Days:

> Studeamus viduarum defensioni, pupillorum utilitati, lugentium consolationi, dissidentium paci. Suscipiatur peregrinus, adjuvetur oppressus, vestiatur nudus, foveatur aegrotus: ut quicumque nostrum de justis laboribus auctori bonorum omnium Deo sacrificium hujus pietatis obtulerit, ab eodem regni caelestis praemium percipere mereatur. Quarta igitur et sexta Feria jejunemus (*Breviarium Romanum* 153).
>
> TRANS.: Let us clothe the naked and cherish the sick. And may every one of us that shall offer to the God of all goodness this Advent sacrifice of fasting and alms be by Him fitted to receive an eternal reward in His heavenly kingdom! We fast on Wednesday and Friday; and there is likewise a Vigil on Saturday.

During the Second week of Advent, on Friday, at Matins, the third Lectio also insists on the fact that wine is banned, and the same applies to singing:

"Cum cantico non bibent vinum; amara erit potio bibentibus illam; *Breviarium Romanum* 150" (They shall not drink wine with a song: the drink shall be bitter to them that drink). Similar negative references to drinking are found during the third week of Advent on Monday at Matins, both in the first and in the second Lessons (*Breviarium Romanum* 246). The *Lectio* recommends that only when the Lord has come should they lift up their voice and sing praises (*Breviuarium Romanum* 150), which is actually what the characters do to celebrate the good news after their enlightenment as will be seen in Chapter 7.

The second Lesson at Matins on the second Saturday of Advent is Isaiah 25:4-7, and revolves around the idea that the Lord will provide nutritious food to those who suffer from lack of nourishment and live in a world with adverse conditions, which somehow recalls the situation described by the shepherds in the plays and which is discussed in Chapter 5:

> Spiritus enim robustorum quasi turbo impellens parietem. Sicut aestus in siti, tumultum alienorum humiliabis; et quasi calore sub nube torrente, propaginem fortium marcescere facies. Et faciet Dominus exercituum omnibus populis in monte hoc convivium pinguium, convivium vindemiae, pinguium medullatorum, vindemiae defaecatae (*Breviarium Romanum* 151).
>
> TRANS.: For the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place, and Thou shalt bring low the blast of the terrible ones even as the heat with the shadow of a cloud. And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on

> the lees well refined.[146] And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the band tied upon all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.

The nutritious food makes reference to Christ's body in the form of bread, and the wine to his blood, the direct link with Communion being apparent. The meal in *The Chester Painters' Playe* actually contains certain elements that resemble the celebration of a Mass. In fact, when the shepherds gather for supper, Secundus Pastor says grace before they start to eat:

> Nowe sythen God hath gathered us together,
> With good harte I thanke him of his grace.
> Welcome be thow, well fayre wedder.
> Tudd, will we shape us to some solace?

As if for a Eucharistic celebration, God has gathered them together and the shepherd is thankful. In addition, even if the Second Shepherd refers to real meat of the ram ("fayre wedder"), the connection with Jesus as the Lamb of God could be established in the sense that, for Christians, Christ is the Lamb of God and the perfect, sinless sacrifice offered by the Father to atone for the sins of mankind. The shepherds, as sinful creatures who have not met Jesus yet, sacrifice a ram in order to find some solace. Nevertheless, such comfort will not be found until the end of the play, when the encounter with the Christ-Child takes place, hence the irony of the scene. Yet, there are other symbols that recall the Eucharist in this pantagruelian meal. Thus, they share bread, specifically, "jannock of Lancastershyre"

[146] The same ideas are repeated on the Thursday of the Third week at Matins (third Lesson) which is taken from Isaiah 33:14-17: "Iste in excelsis habitabit; munimenta saxorum sublimitas ejus: panis ei datus est, aquae ejus fideles sun" (He shall dwell on high, the fortifications of rocks shall be his highness: bread is given him, his waters are sure).

(l. 113) and some drink (l. 145), stating that "Such lickour men to live" (l. 147). However, "jannock of Lancastershyre" is defined as "a loaf of leavened oaten bread" (Lumiansky and Mills, *The Chester Mystery Cycle*, vol. 2: 439) and, therefore, it would not be valid for Transubstantiation purposes, which requires specifically unleavened or Matzo bread made out of wheat flour ("Altar Breads").

A similar mock Eucharist seems to take place in Fernández's *Auto o Farsa* as the shepherds share wine and bread. Thus Pascual asks Llorente "¿quieres pan, o vino?; ll. 87-89" (would you like bread or wine?) and Llorente chooses bread. It is interesting to note that this mock Eucharist takes place while they play games and insult each other; as they are engaged in this buffoonery, Juan tries in vain to announce the Birth of Jesus, but he is interrupted again and again by the shepherds, who fail to comprehend the message.

The numerous allusions to imbibing in the plays seem to be related to the Advent ban on the consumption of wine. The idea present in the liturgical texts is that God will punish those who drink at a period of fasting as He did to the people of Ephraim. This is recalled in Isaiah 28:1-3, which is read in the first Lesson on Monday during the third week of Advent, at Matins:

> Vae coronae superbiae ebriis Ephraim et flori decidenti gloriae exultationis eius qui erant in vertice vallis pinguissimae errantes a vino. Ecce validus et fortis Domini sicut impetus grandinis turbo confringens sicut impetus aquarum multarum inundantium et emissarum super terram spatiosam pedibus conculcabitur corona superbiae ebriorum Ephraim (*Breviarium Romanum* 8-9).

> TRANS.: Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, to the fading flower of their glorious beauty; which are upon the head of the fat valley, overcome with wine. Behold the Lord is mighty and strong, as a tempest of hail, and as a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, sent forth over the breadth of the land. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under foot.

Therefore, contrary to Lepow's theory cited above, in all probability, the type of food eaten is not the focus of the catechetical message, but the consumption of products itself during the fasting period, as admonished by the liturgy. The texts highlight that those regulations apply to all people, including members of the Church, as reflected in the second *Lectio* at Matins during the third week of Advent: "Verum hi quoque prae vino nescierunt, et prae ebrietate erraverunt; sacerdos et propheta nescierunt prae ebrietate; absorpti sunt a vino, erraverunt in ebrietate, nescierunt videntem, ignoraverunt judicium; Isaiah 28:4-7" (But these also have been ignorant through wine, and through drunkenness have erred: the priest and the prophet have been ignorant through drunkenness, they are swallowed up with wine, they have gone astray in drunkenness, they have not known him that seeth, they have been ignorant of judgment).

In addition, the Church also highlights the idea that Salvation will be available to all people and classes. This same idea is for instance reinforced on Thursday during the third week of Advent (Matins, third Responsory). The text chosen is Isaiah 62: 2-3: "Videbunt Gentes justum tuum, et cuncti reges inclytum tuum: Et vocabitur tibi nomen novum, quod os Domini nominavit; *Breviarium Romanum* 162" (The Gentiles shall see thy

Righteous One, and all kings thy Glorious One. And thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord hath named). Therefore, what the playwrights seem to highlight is that even if salvation is available to all Christians irrespective of social status, if one wishes to gain salvation, fasting is necessary for all social classes. Furthermore, as seen above, the liturgy of the period refers to Jesus physically and metaphorically as salvific food in connection with the Eucharist, that is, Jesus, as the living bread always available to the faithful through ingestion of His body at the altar.

4.3 The Presents

The gift offering is present in all the English plays, except for *N-Town*, while on the Spanish side it is found in López de Yanguas's *Égloga* and in both works by Lucas Fernández, although the shepherds in the latter case only mention the fact that they will give some goods to the child, since the encounter with the Holy Family does not actually take place. The source of this scene is certainly not the Scripture, for Luke's Gospel does not deal with this matter. When discussing the gift-giving in *Coventry*, King and Davidson argue that "the gifts are clearly intended to be a parallel to the gifts of the Magi" (229), a view that is shared by Stevens and Cawley with reference to the analogous scene in *The First Shepherds' Play* (vol 2: 494). As a matter of fact, the shepherds, as the Kings do,[147] offer material presents

[147] Three gifts are explicitly identified in Matthew 2:1-12: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

to the child, although in the case of the former, the nature of the presents reflects their humble status, as will be seen.

In addition, the shepherds' scene resembles the offering of the Kings in that both the shepherds and the Magi recite Hail lyrics[148] directed both to the Virgin Mary and to her child. These lyrics are recited in the gift-giving ceremony in *N-Town* (ll. 90-118), in *The First Shepherds' Play* (ll. 660-98), in *The Second Shepherds' Play* (ll. 1024-62), in *The Painters' Playe* (ll. 552-83) and in *The Shearmen and Taylors Pageant* (ll. 291-308).[149] To begin with the latter, the simplicity of the gifts only contrasts with the solemnity of the moment:

> Hayle, mayde, modur and wyff soo myld.
> Asse the angell seid, soo haue we fonde.
> I haue nothyng to present with þi chylde
> But my pype—hold, hold, and take yt in thy hond—
> Wherein moche pleysure þat I haue fond.
> And now, to oonowre thy gloreose byrthe
> Thow schallt yt haue to make the myrthe (ll. 291-97).

As may be ascertained from the First Shepherd's words here, all he offers is a musical instrument, his own pipe (l. 294) for it is all he has.[150] Similarly, the Second Shepherd claims that they have "no treysure [. . .] to present the with" (l. 308). On the other hand, the other two rustics offer clothing items in an attempt at giving protection against the chilly

[148] King and Davidson note that a para-liturgical link may be established since Hail lyrics were used at the Elevation of the Host at Mass, too (229). See also Rossell Hope Robbins. "Levation Prayers in Middle English." *Modern Philology* 40 (1942-43): 131-46.

[149] The corresponding lines in the Kings' scenes including the Hail lyrics are: *Towneley* (*Play 14*), ll. 541-58, *The Coventry Pageant of Shearmen and Taylors Pageant*, ll. 644-57, *Chester* (*Play 8*), ll. 136-75.

[150] This association of Jesus with music or harmony is discussed below in Chapter 7. See King and Davidson's note to ll. 291-308 for a further discussion on this present.

night. Accordingly, the Second Shepherd brings a hat, which he puts on the baby's head (ll. 299-304), and the Third Shepherd offers his mittens to protect the newborn's hands (ll. 305-8). This act of charity could be understood as part of the aforementioned Advent prescription on almsdeeds which, by definition, may be understood as "money, clothes, food, and other things given to poor people" ("Almsdeed").

The liturgy of Advent clearly focuses on these charitable acts as it is reminded in the Breviary during the Divine Office—together with the obligation to fast—through Pope Leo the Great's Sermon XIII, "De Jejunio decimi mensis II: Jejunium mensis decimi cur institutum; ejusdem et Christianae erga pauperes misericordiae laus" traditionally known as the "Second Sermon on the December Fast and Almsgiving." The text, as mentioned above, is set aside to be recited on the first, third, and fourth Sundays of Advent at Mattins, and the particular passage on almsgiving is read as the sixth *Lectio* during the Second Nocturn and specifically mentions clothing the needy, as a charitable act:

> Studeamus viduarum defensioni, pupillorum utilitati, lugentium consolationi, dissidentium paci. Suscipiatur peregrinus, adjuvetur oppressus, vestiatur nudus, foveatur aegrotus: ut quicumque nostrum de justis laboribus auctori bonorum omnium Deo sacrificium hujus pietatis obtulerit, ab eodem regni caelestis praemium percipere mereatur.
>
> TRANS.: Let us defend the widow and serve the orphan; let us comfort the afflicted and reconcile the estranged; let us take in the wanderer and succour the oppressed; let us clothe the naked and cherish the sick. And may every one of us that shall offer to the God of all goodness this Advent sacrifice of fasting and alms be by Him fitted to receive an eternal reward in His heavenly kingdom!

As the ones in *Coventry*, the gifts in Yanguas's play and in Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa*, intend to clothe the baby, which is one of the explicit references in Sermon XIII. In the first case, Mingo offers his "hato," (l. 434) a generic term to refer to all the garments and accouterments used in a specific profession.[151] Later on the rustics offer "un par de vellones; l. 422" (a couple of fleeces) whereas in the second case, the list of garments is longer:

> MARCELO
> ¿No's digo que le lleuemos
> algo con que le empañemos?
>
> GIL
> Mi gauán le quiero dar.
>
> GIL
> Pues yo le quiero endonar
> mi fedegosa (ll. 591-95).
>
> TRANS.:
> MARCELO
> Haven't I told you that
> We should bring something to clothe him?
>
> GIL
> My coat I wish to offer.
>
> GIL
> I wish to give him
> My sheepskin jacket.

The presents in other plays, however, lend themselves to a more figurative reading. Perhaps the most symbolic gift-offering ceremony is the one in Manrique's *La Representación del Nasçimiento* (ll. 129-81). In this play, after the shepherds and the angels have paid homage to the child, the newborn is given the tokens of the Passion. After line 128, the text announces

[151] The term may also refer to his flock, as for example in line 415, in which Benito begs the child to keep his flocks safe from the evil wolf ("que guarde mi hato del lobo malino"). See "hato."

"Los martirios que presentan al Niño" (the tokens of martyrdom presented to the Child), each of them followed by a speech by an unidentified character: "El cáliz" (the chalice), "el astelo e la soga" (the pillar and the rope), "los açotes" (the flagellation), "la corona" (the crown[152]), "la cruz" (the cross), "los clavos" (the nails), "la lança" (the spear).

Other gifts that may be read symbolically are, for instance, the ones in *The First Shepherds' Play*, where the characters offer a "spruse coffer," i.e., a coffer made of spruce fir (l. 672), a "ball" (l. 681), and a "botell" (l. 694). According to modern editors, the presents may be viewed as having two possible meanings and functions, namely, to "[. . .] provide a homely and humorous touch or to convey iconographical and allegorical significance" (Stevens and Cawley vol.2: 494). As regards the allegorical reading, the editors follow Cantalupe and Griffith and postulate that the gifts are symbolic of the Trinity (ibidem).[153] This symbolic connection with the Trinity is perhaps more evident in the *Second Shepherds' Play*, in which the Secundus Pastor offers the child a bird (l. 1044), whereas the Third Shepherd gives him a ball. The common depiction of the Holy Spirit—the third component of the Trinity—is by means of a white dove as told in the Gospel accounts of the Baptism of Christ.[154] Likewise, birds offered as gifts are also found in Fernández's *Auto o Farsa* as well as in Enzina's

[152] The crown of thorns.

[153] See Eugene B. Cantelupe and Richard Griffith. "The Gifts of the Shepherds in the Wakefield Secunda Pastorum: An Iconographical Interpretation." *Medieval Studies* 28 (1966): 328-35.

[154] The baptism of Jesus is accounted for in Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11 and Luke 3:21–23.

Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias. In the former, Pedro says he will offer the child, among other things, "un pato; l. 509" (a duck) and "un chorlito; l. 511"(a plover), whereas in the latter, Antón will bring Jesus a "xerguerito; l. 240" (a little goldfinch). As for the ball, it may stand for the orb or the globe of the world which is commonly associated with God the Father, although it is occasionally used in representations of Christ.[155] Actually, Mingo in Yanguas's play describes the child as having the world in his palm:

> Y a Ti, Niño sancto, de gracia infinita,
> que tienes el mundo metido en la palma,
> ofrézcote el cuerpo y mándote el alma,
> y mientra que viva, de vicio me quita (ll. 436-39).
>
> TRANS.:
> And for you, Holy Child of infinite grace
> Who holds the world in your palm,
> I offer my body and send my soul,
> And, while I live, my vices remove.

The meaning and interpretation of Primus Pastor's gift in *The Second Shepherds' Play* is not as straightforward, for he offers a "bob of cherys" (l. 1036). This gift has been analyzed by scholars as a symbol of mid-winter fertility and a parallel to the miraculous Birth of Jesus (Stevens and Cawley vol 2: 511). In fact, in *The N-Town Play of the Birth of Christ* (*Play 12*: l. 272) there is a cherry tree bearing fruit before Jesus's Birth. The cherries also appear in a ballad known as the "The Cherry-Tree Carol" recorded in the 19th century by Francis James Child in the so called "Child Bal-

[155] See George Ferguson. *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art: With Illustrations from Paintings from the Renaissance*. Oxford: OUP, 1966. 222.

lads.[156]" The ballad tells an apocryphal story[157] of the Virgin Mary, who stops at a cherry orchard on their way to Bethlehem because of the census. In the most popular version, Mary asks Joseph to pick cherries for her, but Joseph—who believes that he has been cuckolded—responds that the child's father should pick cherries for her. At this point, Jesus speaks to the tree from the womb and orders it to lower a branch down to Mary. Joseph repents at once, as he witnesses the miracle. In addition, cherries tend to be associated in late medieval art with the fruit of Paradise and with Christ as the blessed fruit redeemed.[158]

A more straightforward symbolic connection may be established in the case of some of the presents in the Spanish plays. The herdsmen offer sheep, lambs and goats, which relates to the idea of Jesus as the Good Shepherd and as "the Lamb of god who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Such is the case in Fernández's *Auto o Farsa* where Llorente offers "un gordo cabrito; l. 510" (a fat young goat) whereas Pedro offers "vn cordero; l. 511" (a lamb). Likewise, in Yanguas's work, Benito gives the baby two lambs, "un borro grosero y un fino; l. 412" (a fat lamb and

[156] The work includes a collection of 305 folk ballads from England and Scotland together with their American versions. The Cherry-Tree Carol is number 54. For the Lyrics and the music see Albert B. Friedman, ed. *The Penguin Book of Folk Ballads of the English-Speaking World*. Harmondsworth: Peguin Books Ltd., 1976. 59-60.

[157] The story seems to be based on the apocryphal Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, chapters 21-22, although here the event takes place during the Flight into Egypt, and the fruit tree is a palm tree and not a cherry tree. In the apocryphal story, Jesus has already been born and so Joseph is upset because he is unable to reach the dates and because they have no water.

[158] For a discussion of this motif in the Late Middle Ages see Stevens and Cawley vol. 2: 511 note to l. 1044 and Lawrence J. Ross. "Symbol and Structure in the Secunda Pastorum." *Comparative Drama*. 1.2 (1967): 122–49.

a thin one), the same as Pero, who offers "el manso y la borra manchada: l. 418" (the bellwether and the spotted ewe) and "tres rezentales; l. 419" (three suckling lambs). The association of Jesus with the Good Shepherd may also be established when they offer him their "cayado; l. 435" (crook).

The first gift offered in *The York Play* is a "belle of tynne" (l. 103), probably a sheep bell as the ones used by shepherds to locate their herds, being guided by their sound. According to Davidson, this particular bell must have been a smaller one, for it is said to be attached to a "baren" or poor brooch (l. 103). He also claims that bells were also meant to be a valuable protection against the Devil (*The York Corpus Christi Plays* note l. 104 and ff). However, it would make little sense to offer this kind of protection to the Son of God since, as John's Gospel explains, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). This matter appears clearly in *N-Town*, at the gift-giving ceremony, when Primus Pastor identifies Jesus with his Father and with the light of the Trinity, and considers Him the defeater of Satan:[159]

> Heyl, God grettest, I grete þe on grownde!
> þe gredy devyl xal grone grysly as a gryse
> Whan þu wynnyst þis worlde with þi wyde wounde
> And puttyst man to paradys with plenty of prys.
> To loue þe is my delyte
> Heyl, floure fayr and fre,
> Lyght from þe Trynyté!

[159] On the defeat of the Devil and Death in *York*, see King, *The York Mystery Cycle* 43, 78, 165.

Heyl, blyssyd mote þu be!
Heyl, mayde fayrest in syght! (ll. 94-95).

Returning to the gifts in *York*, a couple of "cobill notis uppon a bande" (l. 112) are offered as well, which may well refer to a sort of bracelet, as it is described as hazelnuts attached to a string.[160] The Third Shepherd finally offers the baby a spoon:[161] "[...] an horne spone, þat have I here— | And it will herbar fourty pese—" (l. 124-25), that is, a spoon large enough to hold forty peas. It is interesting to note that the third shepherd's gift in *The Shrewsbury Officium Pastorum* is also a spoon, although this one is larger as it "may herbar an hundrith pese" (l. 44).[162] Similarly, a spoon ("cuchara" l. 411) is also one of the gifts offered by Mingo in Yanguas's work. Also, in *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, Miguellejo says he will give the child "[...] de las mis cuchares, | dos, tres pares" (of my spoons | two or three pairs); in Fernández's *Auto o Farsa*, Juan also considers giving the child "vn cuchar" (a spoon, l. 513).

It should be highlighted that some of the gifts offered are either food items or tools to feed the child, as it is the case of the various spoons. The straightforward reading of these gifts would be the shepherds' determination to provide nurture to the newborn, in an act of charity. In addition,

[160] See Davidson, *The York Corpus Chisty Plays* note to l. 112.

[161] Spoons frequently appear in iconography in association with the infant Jesus; for a discussion, see Mikiko Ishii. "A Spoon and the Christ Child." Ed. Clifford Davidson. *The Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages*. New York: AMS Press, 2005. 128–39.

[162] The speech in *Shrewsbury* (ll. 39–49) and the Third Shepherd's speech in *York* (ll. 120-7) are virtually identical. The only significant difference is that *Shrewsbury* has "dayntese" (l. 46) instead of *York's* "novelté" (l. 127), and the addition of two extra lines in *York*. On the similarities between *The York Play* and *The Shrewsbury Officium Pastorum* see Beadle, *The York Plays* 428; and Davis, *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments* xvii-xiv.

the insistence on food elements in the texts may simply signify that the fasting period is over. For instance, apart from the aforementioned cherries, birds, and lambs, which are obviously edible goods, the shepherds in Yanguas's play provide the child with "leche; l. 421" (milk) and "para migas de sebo una pella" (some lard to make *migas*). [163] In Fernández's *Auto o Farsa*, Juan also says he will give Him some milk and cream: "Yo leche le quiero dar, | y natas y vn cuchar; ll. 512-13" (I'd like to give him some milk | and some cream, and a spoon). In Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, the catalogue of food items is longer: "leche; l. 225" (milk), "miga cocha; l. 227" (a humble dish made of cooked bread crumbs), "xetas y turmas de tierra; l. 235" (wild mushrooms and truffles), "un quesito; l. 236" (cheese), "natas y mantequillas; l. 237" (cream and butter), "tres o cuatro morcillas; l. 239" (three or four blood puddings), and "huevos; l. 43" (eggs).[164]

4.4 Failure to Understand

The shepherds in the plays, as has been seen above, eat and drink and have no connection with the divinity whatsoever. Not only that, when the divine signs arrive, namely, the light and the angel and his words, they are unable to grasp their meaning. Only when they cease their eating and

[163] *Migas* (literally, bread crumbs in Spanish) is a rustic dish made with leftover bread usually cooked with different types of fatty meat and usually grapes, depending on the region.

[164] The shepherds in this play also announce that they will give the child presents other than food: "una barreña de haya; l. 231-32" (a beech bowl) and a "cachorrito; l. 324" (a puppy). They state that they will also bring "cantares; l. 241" (songs).

drinking, the characters' transformation and subsequent Christian enlightenment takes place. The seasonal liturgy clearly links these two circumstances, and accordingly reminds the faithful that without a proper fast and abstinence from earthly pleasures, God's message will not be revealed. The Church adds to this the obligation of almsgiving as the Roman Breviary recalls in the prayers of the Divine Office starting on the First Sunday of Advent.[165] Thus, in the fifth Lesson at Matins, the responsory reads:

> Ad cujus adventum omnem hominem convenit praeparari: ne quem aut ventri deditum, aut curis saecularibus inveniat implicatum. Quotidiano enim, dilectissimi, experimento probatur, potus satietate aciem mentis obtundi, et ciborum nimietate vigorem cordis hebetari: ita ut delectatio edendi etiam corporum contraria sit saluti, nisi ratio temperantiae obsistat illecebrae, et quod futurum est oneri, subtrahat voluptati (*Roman Breviary* 216).
>
> TRANS.: Let every man then make himself ready against the coming of the Lord, so that He may not find him making his belly his god, or the world his chief care. Dearly beloved brethren, it is a matter of every day experience that fulness of drink dulleth the keenness of the mind, and that excess of eating unnerveth the strength of the will. The very stomach protesteth that gluttony doth harm to the bodily health, unless temperance get the better of desire, and the thought of the indigestion afterward check the indulgence of the moment.

In the plays, it is clear that the shepherds' gluttony before the Birth takes place affects their minds and does not allow them to comprehend any of the divine signs. Similarly, as seen above, the sixth Lesson, links gluttony to idleness and leisure. What is more significant is that the *Lectio* explains

[165] As seen above, the text set aside to be recited at Matins during the fourth Lesson (Second Nocturn) is taken from the Sermons of Pope St Leo the Great ("Sermon 8") on the December fast and almsgiving.

that the soul cannot be free to grasp God's messages unless the mind is set on holy thoughts:

> Quamvis enim sine anima nihil caro desideret, et inde accipiat sensus, unde sumit et motus: eiusdem tamen est animae, quaedam sibi subditae negare substantiae, et interiori judicio ab inconvenientibus exteriora frenare: ut a corporeis cupiditatibus saepius libera, in aula mentis possit divinae vacare sapientiae: ubi omni strepitu terrenarum silente curarum, in meditationibus sanctis, et in deliciis laetetur aeternis (*Breviarium Romanum* 135).
>
> TRANS.: The body without the soul hath no desires; its sensibility cometh from the same source as its movements. And it is the duty of a man with a reasonable soul to deny something to his lower nature and to keep back the outer man from things unseemly. Then will his soul, free from fleshly cravings, sit often at leisure in the palace of the mind, dwelling on the wisdom of God. There, when the roar and rattle of earthly cares are stilled, will she feed on holy thoughts and entertain herself with the expectation of the everlasting joy.

There are numerous signs sent from heaven that the rustics fail to understand in the dramas. For instance, the winged messengers are contemplated with wonder and amazement. In particular, the extraordinary luminescence associated with them, usually in the form of a bright star,[166] as well as their music, puzzles them immensely. In addition, the actual words encoded in the angels' message (usually the *Gloria* sung in Latin[167]) are but mere gibberish to the mesmerized shepherds. All these alien items combined provoke a deep fear in the characters, a "timore magno" which has its biblical source in Luke 2:9: "et timuerunt timore magno" (and they were sore afraid). However, the playwrights resort to the comic relief

[166] The star feature is analyzed in Chapter 5.

[167] Music itself or, rather, its beauty, astonishes the shepherds as well. See Chapter 7 for an analysis of music in the dramas.

to confront the crucial moment of the heavenly announcement and, in fact, the true nature of the clownish shepherds[168] is revealed as they figure out the meaning of the extraordinary circumstances. For instance, in *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*, Pastor III wonders "What thyng ys yondur thatt schynith soo bryght" (l. 230) and states that he had never seen "soche a syght in fyld" (l. 232). Likewise, one of Fray Íñigo's shepherds is woken up by what he describes as lighting-like light: "Ví salir por el collado | claridad relampaguera; *Copla* 151" (I saw coming out from behind the hill | A lightning-like brightness). Similarly, in Fernández's *Auto o Farsa*, the heretofore gloomy atmosphere becomes a well-lit bucolic prairie with scented flowers and exultant animals, but the shepherds, at this stage, fail to comprehend the logical reason behind the unexpected change in the circumstances:

> PASCUAL
> Es cosa para espantar
> de aquesto; ¿qué querrá ser?
> Las aues muestran plazer
> con su muy dulce cantar.
> Y animales con bramar,
> los campos con sus olores
> como que touiessen flores. (ll. 145-52).
>
> TRANS.:
> PASCUAL
> This is awesome indeed
> What might this be?
> The birds show their pleasure
> Through their beautiful songs

[168] For a study and evolution in Castilian drama of the shepherd-clown or "pastor-bobo" into a prologue speaker in the *comedias* of the Golden Age, see John Brotherton. *The "Pastor-Bobo" in the Spanish Theater before the Time of Lope de Vega*. London: Tamesis, 1975.

> And the animals through their bellowing,
> The fields with their scents
> As though they were in bloom.

In *The Chester Painters' Playe*, the discussion on the light is lengthier and shows the shepherds' sheer apprehensiveness:

> [PRIMUS PASTOR]
> [. . .] For to see this light here
> a man may bee afright here,
> for I am afeard.
>
> SECUNDUS PASTOR
> Feard for a fraye nowe
> may wee bee all nowe;
> and yett it is night,
> yett seemes yt day nowe.
> Never, soothly to saye nowe,
> see I such a sight.
>
> TERTIUS PASTOR
> Such a sight seeminge
> and a light leerninge
> lettes mee to looke.
> All to my deeminge,
> from a starre streaminge
> yt to mee stroacke.
>
> GARCIUS
> That starre if it stand
> to seek will I fond,
> though my sight fayle mee.
> While I may live in lond
> why should I not fond,
> yf it will avayhe mee? (ll. 297-323).

Garcius approaches the situation pragmatically and resorts to his known universe to pinpoint the origin of the light concluding that "of the sonne this sight is" (l. 326). The situation makes them afraid, and the aforementioned ambivalent role of the shepherds is revealed when Primus Pastor

anachronistically proposes to kneel down and ask the "Trinitee" for guidance (ll. 334-38). Fear increases and they beg the Lord to enlighten them ("sent us some sight why that is sent;" ll. 347-38). Then the angel appears and words of the chanted *Gloria* become an extra source of anxiety and uneasiness, giving rise to one of the most comic moments in the play:

> [PRIMUS PASTOR]
> Fellowes in feare,
> may yee not here
> this mutinge on highe?
>
> SECUNDUS PASTOR
> In 'glore' and in 'glere'?
> Yett noe man was nere
> within our sight.
>
> TERTIUS PASTOR
> Naye, yt was a 'glorye.'
> Nowe am I sorye
> bowt more songe.
>
> GARCIUS
> Of this strange storye
> such mirth is merye;
> I would have amonge.
>
> PRIMUS PASTOR
> As I then deemed,
> 'selsis' it seemed
> that bee songe soe.
>
> SECUNDUS PASTOR
> Why he the light leemed,
> a wreakinge mee weened;
> I wyst never whoo
>
> TERTIUS PASTOR
> What songe was this, saye yee,
> that he sange to us all three?
> Expounded shall yt bee
> erre wee hethen passe;
> for I am eldest of degree

> and alsoe best, as seemes mee,
> hit was 'grorus glorus' with a 'glee.'
> Hit was neyther more nor lasse (ll. 358-83).

The clownish interpretation of the words of the *Gloria* continues through ll. 384-485 until they decide to sing a song to the Lord so He may enlighten them (ll. 436-47).[169] Subsequently, they somehow decode the message and decide to set off for Bethlehem (ll. 448-51).[170] A similar reaction to the angel's words, though substantially shorter, is also found in *N-Town*, where the shepherds debate whether or not what they heard was "Gle, glo, glory" or "Gle, glo, glas, glum" (ll. 65, 69). The Coventry *Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* also includes the same discussion:

> PASTOR II
> "Glore glorea in excelsis"— þat wase þer songe;
> How sey ye, fellois, seyd the not thus?
>
> PASTOR I
> Thatt ys wel seyd; now goo we hence
> To worschipe that chyld of hy manyffecence
> And that we ma syng in his presence
> "Et in tarra pax omynibus" (ll. 254-63).

On the Castilian side, the shepherds also fail to comprehend the meaning of the new circumstances created by God's messengers and react in a somewhat similar manner. In Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa*, the angel does not feature as a character, but Juan, the wise character of the lot, recounts

[169] A stage direction at l. 347 indicates that they sing "troly, loly, loly, loo." For details on this particular song, see Chapter 7.

[170] The decision to go to Bethlehem is actually taken twice, first they reach the conclusion by themselves and then after the angel gives them some guidance (compare ll. 467-70, 471-2). Lumiansky & Mills suggest that the odd duplication may indicate that there were two play-texts with alternative versions, a theory they sustain in light of the different stanza-form. See Lumiansky & Mills vol. 2: 118 note to ll. 448-51.

the specifics of the message. When he tells his narrow-minded fellows that he had heard an angel sing, Llorente and Pascual are reluctant to accept that possibility and propose a more worldly answer. Thus, they believe that the sounds Juan must have heard, were made by "grillos; l. 272," (crickets), "crucrillos; l. 273" (cuckoos), "galos; l. 274," (roosters) or by "algún llobo rauaz;" l. 282" (a rapacious wolf). Juan insists and attempts to reproduce the *Gloria*:

> ¿Aún no me querrés creer?
> Vilo assí, como vos veo,
> cantando la «grolia Deo.
> en el cielo deue hauer,
> y en la tierra paz tener» (ll. 284-88).
>
> TRANS.:
> You don't believe me yet?
> I saw him thus, as I am seeing you,
> singing the «groria Deo
> In heaven there must be
> and peace on Earth».

It should be noted that Fernández was not the first author to include the imitation of the *Gloria* in the Castilian tradition, as Fray Íñigo had already incorporated this device in his *Coplas*. Thus, as will be discussed in Chapter 7, in *copla* 155, ll. 1-10, one of the shepherds offers an account of what he heard the angels sing and paraphrases the hymn in Spanish, but including words in corrupted Latin such as "groria" instead of "Gloria," "indaçielçis Deo" instead of "Gloria in excelsis Deo," and so forth. The discussion on the celestial words is also found in *The First Shepherds' Play* and in *The Second Shepherds' Play*, although it is not as elaborated as in *Chester*. In *The First Shepherds' Play*, after the angel announces the Birth

and itemizes the particulars (ll. 426-38), the characters also speculate on the significance of the song and on the nature of the creature that sang it. They even mention Jesus in an anachronistic interjection as they express their curiosity and fear (l. 343):

> PRIMUS PASTOR
> A, Godys dere Dominus!
> What was that sang?
> It was wonder curiose
> With small noytys emang;
> I pray to God saue vs
> Now in this thrang!
> I am ferd, by Iesus
> somwhat be wrang.
> Me thoght,
> Oone scremyd on lowed.
> I suppose it was a clowde;
> In myn erys it sowde,
> By hym that me boght!
>
> SECUNDUS PASTOR
> Nay, that may not be,
> I say you certan,
> For he spake to vs thre
> As he had bene a man;
> When he lemyd on this lee,
> my hart shakyd than; (ll. 439-56).

As in *Chester*, whose shepherds simply conclude that the origin of the light is the sun (l. 326), or Fernández's work in which they believe that it was not an angel singing but animals making sounds, the two shepherds in *The First Shepherds' Play* also find answers to the extraordinary circumstances in the quotidian and familiar: Primus Pastor believes that there was nothing extraordinary in what they saw above in the sky, as it was in fact a

mere cloud in his opinion (l. 47),[171] to which a perplexed Secundus Pastor responds that what they saw must have been a flying man, since whatever it was, it actually spoke to them (l. 453-54).

As in their English counterparts, the description of the angels as flying people is present in many Castilian plays. In *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*, the sighting of unidentified flying objects provokes accordingly deep fright and bewilderment in the rustics, who finally come to the conclusion that they saw a man up in the air ("un ombre viene bolando;" *copla* 123, l. 10). Likewise, in Lucas Fernández's *Auto o Farsa*, Pedro similarly describes that he was astonished because he saw flying kids who were singing (ll. 425-26): "mirando que van volando | zagales y van cantando" (seeing that there were | flying kids who were singing). Also, in López de Yanguas's *Égloga*, Pero describes the angels in the same terms, "garçones volando pasaban apares; l. 63" (flying boys were passing in pairs). In *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*, Juan Pastor considers then sharing what they had witnessed with his neighbors in the village, but Mingo finally deems it wise to think it twice before telling anyone, since people could believe that they are either drunk or that they have lost their heads:

> [...] y tanbién si mientras vamos
> bolando desaparesçe,
> cata, Juan, dirán que entramos
> o que borrachos estamos
> o quel seso nos fallesçe (*copla* 126, ll. 6-10).
>
> TRANS.:

[171] The identification of God with clouds is recurrent in the Breviary, as the first Antiphon on the Second Sunday of Advent at Lauds shows: "Ecce in nubibus caeli Dominus veniet cum potestate magna, alleluia" (The Lord cometh in the clouds of Heaven).

> [. . .] If he [the angel] disappears
> While we get there
> And it flies away,
> Alas, Juan, they'll say that we both
> Are either drunk
> Or that our brain is deceiving us.

Their fearful encounter with the flying man is exploited later on when they discuss the contents of his song, that is, the news of the Birth:

> según que tengo el espanto,
> que oy a pocas estava
> de caer muerto en el suelo
> quando el ombre que bolava
> oiste cómo cantava
> quera Dios éste moçuelo (*copla* 139, ll. 5-10).

> TRANS.:
> I'm so afraid
> That today I was about
> To fall dead on the ground
> When the flying man
> You heard how he sang
> That this child was God.

In Enzina's *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad*, fear is also the straightforward reaction—Lucas states that when the angel made the announcement "gran temor huvimos; l. 77" (it made us really afraid). Likewise, in Lucas Fernández's *Auto o Farsa*, Juan, who is the one who tells the others about his encounter with the angel, is asked by another shepherd if he was afraid when he heard the creature: PASCUAL: "Y espantóte?. J[uan]: ¡Miafé! sí. (l. 260); JUAN: Es cosa de grande espanto; l. 262 (Pascual: Did it scare you? | Juan: Lord! It did. Juan: It's a very frightening thing). Later on, Pedro describes that he was astonished when he saw what he defines as flying kids singing a song:

He estado casi embabido
mirando que van volando
zagales y van cantando
por en somo del exido
vn cantar desminuýdo,
haziendo mill gargalismos
y gozándose ellos mismos.
Y no sé por dó se han ydo,
ni les atinaré el nido (ll. 424-32)

TRANS.:
I was almost in shock
Seeing them as they were flying,
Kids who were singing,
Over that communal land
A subtle song,
Making a thousand gargling sounds
And enjoying themselves.
But I don't know which way they went
Nor where their nest might be located.

Similarly, in López de Yanguas's *Égloga*, Mingo recounts how the light made him feel "espantado", i. e., terrified (l. 20). Later, Pero humbly admits that he was really afraid:

[PERO]
Yo, pardiez, Benito, que tuve temor
en ver que era gente venida del cielo:
a pocas estuve que no di en el suelo,
según me metieron de grande el pavor.
Mas ellos dijeron: Escucha, pastor.
Y aun casi hablaron gramata o latín (65-70).

TRANS.:
[PERO]
Indeed, Benito, I was afraid
When I saw that they were people from heaven.
I almost fell on the ground,
Because they really scared me
But they told me: Listen, shepherd
And they almost spoke "grammata" or Latin

As may be ascertained, as in other plays, the Latin spoken by the angels is also a great mystery for the herdsmen (ll. 70-2). In Yanguas's work, however, the angels do not sing the actual *Gloria*, even if the shepherds clearly indicate that they communicate in Latin and are anachronistically said to have prayed Matins, which would have been recited in this same language (l. 75).

Additionally, in certain cases, the shepherds relate the supernatural happenings to the world of magic and witchcraft. Actually, the shepherds in both the Castilian and the Spanish traditions show some pagan traits which evidently reinforce their unredeemed status. For example, in *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*, the reason why the rustics came up with the idea of the flying man is because they only knew one person who could allegedly fly, a man called Juan Escolar, who was deemed to be a local wizard or sorcerer acquainted with magic:

> [...] que no puedo ysmaginar,
> hablando, Mingo, de veras,
> que ombre sepa bolar
> sy no es Juan escolar,
> que sabe dencantaderas (*Copla* 131).
>
> TRANS.:
> I can't think of,
> As we speak, Mingo, truly,
> Of any other man who can fly
> Other than Juan Escolar
> Who knows about charming spells.

The shepherds' methods to appease "the creature" in the *Coplas* also seem to belong to a ritualistic pagan society. The characters in fact try to placate what they believe to be an evil spirit, for they fear it might scare their

sheep "quiçá después | espantarnos ha el Ganado; copla 128, ll. 9-10" (Maybe later | [he] will frighten our cattle). This gives rise to a rather clownish scene as one of the shepherds decides to greet the creature by tipping his "muça" (a type of hat) and by bowing low (*copla* 124, ll. 5-10) in order to show respect.[172] They also consider threatening the alien creature with a dog ("la mi perra bermeja | le sobará la pelleja; *copla* 128, ll. 8-9" (my red-haired dog | Will tear his skin apart); if all that fails, they will run away. However, they reckon that running away will not actually work well for the spirit "buela como aguililla; *copla* 128, l. 5" (It flies like a little eagle). They finally contemplate treating him to a meal: "mas paresçe mejor es | convidallo a un presado" (But we'd rather | Treat him to some meat; *copla* 128, ll. 7-10). If that fails again, they plan to sing and dance in front of him hoping that their ceremonial dance will charm the spirit and force it to leave: "y tienpla bien tu guitarra | y yo con una piçarra | començemos de bailar; *copla* 129, ll. 8-10" (and tune well your guitar | And I will grab a piece of slate | Let's start dancing). In this sense, Stern, following Gillet,[173] states that the dancing reflects the primitive pagan society the shepherds belong to, a practice that, in her opinion, would be linked to acts of magic designed to appease troubled spirits ("Fray Íñigo de Mendoza..." 202-3).

In Lucas Fernández's works there is also a strong determination to associate the shepherds with heathen practices. In his *Auto o Farsa*, before

[172] This is similar to what Primus Pastor suggests in *The Painters' Playe* after seeing the light: "Fellowes, will wee | kneele downe on our knee" (ll. 334-35).

[173] Joseph E. Gillet, ed, *Propalladia and Other Works of Bartolomé de Torres Naharro*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961. 24-29.

the announcement of the Birth, a new atmosphere affects the shepherds and their sheep. Pascual believes that that the sheep are possessed by spirits: "asmo que tienen spritos | según que anda oy alterado; ll.120-21" ([one would say] they have spirits inside | For they are so flustered today). Later in the play, Juan recounts that he saw the angel; Pascual is scared and wonders if Juan was not charmed by a serpent ("serpentine encantada") and has lost his mind (ll. 262-65). However, the witchcraft motif is more significant in *Égloga o Farsa*, as the local hermit of St Bricio's Chapel (ll. 161-62) is described by shepherds as a cunning witch or even as the Devil himself, as Gil's words specify:

> "Éssa es gran embaÿdora,
> gran dïabro, encantadora; (ll. 162-4)
> [...] Medio bruxa asmo qu'es,
> y aun aosadas,
> que si buscarla querrés,
> cada noche la topéis
> por estas encruzijadas. (ll. 165-70).
>
> TRANS.:
> That [woman] is a great trickster
> A great devil, an enchantress
> [...] She is a half-witch in fact;
> And if one dares
> And wishes to locate her,
> Every night you'll find her
> At these crossroads.

The references to witchcraft continue in ll. 171-210, and they give a detailed account of the hermit's knowledge on potions and beverages, and her abilities to cast spells on people.[174] Anachronistically, Gil believes that,

[174] She is even referred to as a "[...] gran puta vieja | peor que Celestina" ([...] an old whore | [Who] is worse than a go-between).

given the nature her sinful practices, the case should be taken to the Pope himself: "Dime si es caso del Papa | este pecado; ll. 176-77" (Tell me if this is a Pope's case | This sin).

It should be noted that the Scripture includes numerous warnings and prohibitions against idolatry, sorcery, necromancy and the like. An interesting link may actually be established between the shepherds' behavior and that of the biblical Egyptians, with whom the shepherds are identified in several plays.[175] A clear example of these pagan practices and their consequences is found in Isaiah 19:1-15, set aside for the second *Lectio* at Matins on Thursday during the Second Week of Advent:

> Et dirumpetur spiritus Ægypti in visceribus ejus, et consilium ejus praecipitabo; et interrogabunt simulacra sua, et divinos suos, et pythones, et ariolos. Et tradam Ægyptum in manu dominorum crudelium, et rex fortis dominabitur eorum, ait Dominus Deus exercituum (*Breviarium Romanum* 149).
>
> TRANS.: And the spirit of Egypt shall be broken in the bowels thereof, and I will cast down their counsel: and they shall consult their idols, and their diviners, and their wizards, and soothsayers. And I will deliver Egypt into the hand of cruel masters, and a strong king shall rule over them, saith the Lord the God of hosts.

Another clear example is found in Galatians 5:19-21, which apart from sorcery, include many of the practices undertaken by the herdsmen in several plays:

> Manifesta autem sunt opera carnis quae sunt fornicatio inmunditia luxuria idolorum servitus veneficia inimicitiae contentiones aemulationes irae rixae dissensiones sectae invidiae homicidia ebrietates comesationes et his similia quae praedico vobis sicut praedixi quoniam qui talia agunt regnum Dei non consequentur.

[175] The characters' identification with the Egyptians is discussed below in Chapter 6.

> TRANS.: Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.[176]

From the long list of sinful practices, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, or drunkenness are common features among the shepherds in the plays. Similarly, Leviticus 19:31 reads: "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." Likewise, Leviticus 20:27 bluntly indicates that "vir sive mulier in quibus pythonicus vel divinationis fuerit spiritus morte moriantur lapidibus obruent eos sanguis eorum sit super illos" (A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be put to death: they shall be stoned with stones: their blood shall be upon them.). Deuteronomy 18:9-12 is also clear about this:

> Quando ingressus fueris terram quam Dominus Deus tuus dabit tibi cave ne imitari velis abominationes illarum gentium nec inveniatur in te qui lustret filium suum aut filiam ducens per ignem aut qui ariolos sciscitetur et observet somnia atque auguria ne sit maleficus ne incantator ne pythones consulat ne divinos et quaerat a mortuis veritatem omnia enim haec abominatur Dominus et propter istiusmodi scelera delebit eos in introitu tuo.
>
> TRANS.: When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who in-

[176] Similar ideas are found in Mark 6:20-23 and Matthew 15:18-20.

> quires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord. And because of these abominations the Lord your God is driving them out before you.

Returning to the hermit in Fernández's play, the catalogue of heathen practices she performs are regarded as abominations in the Bible.[177] Besides her command of potions and spells, she is reported to bake "bollo maymón," (l. 201), a special type of bread from the Salamanca region with no relation to the world of magic whatsoever. However, the assumption is that the shepherds will not eat this bread since it comes from a witch, and she might have used some magic ingredients in it:

> Sabe hazer bollo maymón,
> y haze asbondo çahumerios
> de las barbas del cabrón.
> Toparl'as hecha visión
> de noche en los ceminterios.
> Tiene soga de ahorcado,
> y de sus dientes;
> las burras ha encomendado
> y de los llobos librado (ll. 201-9).
>
> TRANS.:
> She can bake "maimón" rolls,
> and makes aromatic smokes
> With the beard hair of a billy goat.
> You will see her
> At night at cemeteries.
> She keeps the ropes of hangmen,
> And their teeth;

[177] Other biblical passages that also deal with witchcraft, necromancy, idolatry and the like are: Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:15, 1 Chronicles 10:13-14, 2 Chronicles 33:6, 2 Kings 21:6 and 28:725, Galatians 5: 1-26, Isaiah 1:1-31, 8:19, 19:3, 44:25, 47:8-14, Samuel 15:23 and 28:3-25, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Acts 8: 9-17, 16:16, and 19: 17-19, Deuteronomy 4:19, 16:20 and 18: 9-14, Ezekiel 13:20, 2 Kings 23:24, 2 Thessalonians 2:9,2 Corinthians 11:14, Acts 8:9-13, Micah 5:12, 2 Kings 9:22, Leviticus 19:26, Exodus 7:10-12, Daniel 2:27, Psalm 1:1, Psalm 103:2-4, Psalm 109:1-31, Romans 16:20, Jeremiah 10:2, Nahum 3:4, Proverbs 5:1-10, Revelation 16:13, Colossians 2:8.

> And she has enchanted donkeys
> And freed herself from the wolves.

Even if it is clear that the herdsmen do not eat this "bollo maimón" in the course of the play, it should be noted that earlier in the text the type of bread they consume is "soma" (l. 27), that is, black or rye bread, which is also the variety eaten by Enzina's characters in *Égloga Representada en la Mesma noche de Navidad*. In the latter, Juan, who announces the Birth, tells his mates to stop eating "vianda vil" (i.e., despicable meat or food). Among the foods he commands to stop eating "somas de canes; l. 139," literally, "bread for dogs" but also known as "pan negro" in Spanish.[178] The rye flour used to make black bread caused severe health problems to those who consumed it, and it could even kill them. It was much cheaper than wheat bread, and was commonly eaten by the poor classes, which included shepherds and peasants.

The problem lied in a fungus that affected the grain that caused a disease known as ergotism. This malady was also known as St Anthony's fire or Hell's fire.[179] The long effect of ergot-poisoning,[180] affected the tissues especially of distal structures, such as fingers and toes, which turned black. It also had convulsive effects, including spasms, diarrhea, headaches, nausea and vomiting; it also had mental effects including mania or psychosis,

[178] The passage is quoted and analyzed in the section devoted to the Advent fast.
[179] People affected by this illness commended themselves to St Anthony Abbot and St Anthony of Egypt. See Michael Mollat. *The Poor in the Middle Ages: An Essay in Social History*. Ed. And Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. 63.
[180] "A disease of rye and other cereals caused by an ergot fungus." ("Ergot-poisoning").

since it affected the central nervous system.[181] In the past, the effects of this disease were thought to be caused by witchcraft and magic and the people affected by it were often tried and sentenced, as they were considered to be either witches or sorcerers, or to be enchanted by them.[182]

A class distinction based on the consumption of bread was common in some contemporary literary works, which criticized the vices of the court. That is the case of Diego López de Cortegana's *Tractado de la Miseria de los Cortesanos* (Treatise on the Misery of the Members of the Court), a translation into Spanish[183] of the Latin work *De Curialium Miseriis* by Eneas Silvio Bartolomeo Piccolomini.[184] In the treatise, the author argues that if a low class person or servant were to be treated by a member of the court to a meal, the latter would offer the poor man stale black bread, and not white bread which would be reserved for the rich:

> El pan que te diere sera negro & ta[n] duro q[ue] a malauez lo podras q[ue]brantar co[n] los colmillos, & como quier q[ue] de vn mismo precio sea el pan negro y el blanco: porq[ue] no tomes mala costum-

[181] For more details on the disease, see for example Takayuki Shibamoto and Leonard F. Bjeldanes. *Introduction to Food Toxicology*. San Diego: Academic Press, 2009. 160-62.

[182] It is thought, for instance, that convulsive ergotism may have been a physiological basis for the Salem witchcraft crisis in 1692. See Linnda R. Caporael. "Ergotism: The Satan Loosed in Salem?." *Science* 192 (1976): 21-26. A similar event and trial of witches took place in Spain, in Fuenterrabía, Guipúzcoa, in the 16th century As a bait to catch the "witches" they used apples and black bread. See Pierre Lancre. *Tratado de Brujería vasca: Descripción de la Inconstancia de los Malos Ángeles y Demonios*. Tafalla: Editorial Txalaparta, 2004. 35-37, 127, 180.

[183] On the translations by López de Cortegana, see Francisco Javier Escobar Borrego. "Diego López de Cortegana, Traductor del Asinus Aureus: el cuento de Psique y Cupido." *Cuadernos de Filolología Clásica: Estudios Latinos* 22.1 (2002): 193-209.

[184] Eneas Silvio Bartolomeo Piccolomini (1405–1464) was Pope Pius II from 1458 to his death in 1464.

> bre sie[m]pre comeras delo negro, q[ue] naturalmente los señores quieren que no aya igualdad entrellos ys sus seruidores.[185]
>
> TRANS.: He will give you black bread and it will be so hard that you could not break it with your teeth. Even if the price of white and black bread was the same, to prevent you from falling into bad habits, you would always eat the black one, for the lords wish no equality between them and their servants.

Yet, this is not the only reference to this bread in Spanish literature. In Cristóbal de Castillejo's *Aula de Cortesanos* (1547), in Chapter 4, l. 1392, the author refers to "el negro comer" (the black eating),[186] a clear reference to the aforementioned distinction based on social class. By the same token, a reference to food—and to white bread in particular—as a class marker can be found in Cervantes's *Don Quixote of La Mancha*, chapter 2. The irony lies in that Don Quixote, who is on the first day of his first adventure, stops at an inn for accommodation and supper, although in his sick mind he believes he is in a castle. Thus, he mistakes the cunning innkeeper for the keeper of a castle, the two prostitutes for damsels and he even believes that the humble meal he is having is, in fact, a lavish banquet entertained by princesses:

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[185] The quotation has been transcribed from Diego López de Cortegana, trans. *Pío II, Papa, and Desiderius Erasmus. Tractado de la Miseria de los Cortesanos*. Ed. Jacob Cromberger. Sevilla: 1520. The original Latin text reads: "Panis tuus niger, et adeo durus, ut vix genuinis dentibus frangi queat. Et quamvis eodem pretio sepe niger et albus panis ematur, ne tamen assuescas, semper nigro pasceris, voluntque domini assidue inter se ac servos disparitatem notary, quamvis neque voluptati nonnunquam neque usui fuerit." Eneas Silvio Piccolomini. *De Curialium Miseriis.* Eds. Klaus Schreiner and Ernst Wenzel. Leiden: Brill, 2011. 70-1.

[186] See Cristobal de Castillejo. *Aula de Cortesanos. Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes*. 1999. *Cervantes Virtual*. Web. For a further analysis of Castillejo's treatment of the court, see Mª del Rosario Martínez Navarro. "La Literatura Anticortesana en el Renacimiento Español: Cristóbal de Castillejo." Dissertation. University of Seville, 2014.

> Estando en esto, llegó acaso a la venta un castrador de puercos, y así como llegó sonó su silbato de cañas cuatro o cinco veces, con lo cual acabó de confirmar Don Quijote que estaba en algún famoso castillo, y que le servían con música, y que el abadejo eran truchas, el pan candeal,[187] y las rameras damas, y el ventero castellano del castillo; y con esto daba por bien empleada su determinación y salida. Mas lo que más le fatigaba era el no verse armado caballero, por parecerle que no se podría poner legítimamente en aventura alguna sin recibir la orden de caballería (de Cervantes Saavedra).
>
> TRANS.: While this was going on there came up to the inn a sowgelder, who, as he approached, sounded his reed pipe four or five times, and thereby completely convinced Don Quixote that he was in some famous castle, and that they were regaling him with music, and that the stockfish was trout, the bread the whitest, the wenches ladies, and the landlord the castellan of the castle; and consequently he held that his enterprise and sally had been to some purpose. But still it distressed him to think he had not been dubbed a knight, for it was plain to him he could not lawfully engage in any adventure without receiving the order of knighthood (Ormsby 57).[188]

As may be seen, the author describes the equivalent menus in each of the two social classes, and clearly marks white bread as a luxurious good only available for the higher levels of society.

Witchcraft and magic are also present in some English works. In the *The Second Shepherds' Play*, Mak performs what amounts to a magic ritual for protection by drawing a magic circle around the shepherds and recites a spell:

> Bot abowte you a serkyll
> As rownde as a moyn,
> To I haue done that I wyll,
> Tyll that it be noyn,
> That ye lyg stone-styll (ll. 400-4).

[187] "candeal" refers to a wheat variety ("trigo candeal") which produces one of the finest and whitest flours.

[188] This is the 1885 translation into English by John Ormsby (1829-1895).

There are other references to the world of pagan superstitions in the same play, for instance, when Mak and Gyll try to explain why their newborn child looks so much like the ram that the shepherds had lost and they blame an elf for the mischievous trick:

> He was takyn with an elfe,
> I saw it myself;
> When the clok stroke twelf
> Was he forshapyn (ll. 890-3).

In *The First Shepherds' Play*, the Third Shepherd recites a night prayer for protection,[189] anachronistically involving Jesus, and he makes the Sign of the Cross:

> TERCIUS PASTOR
> For ferde we be fryght
> a crosse lett vs kest—
> Cryst-crosse, benedyght
> Eest and west—
> For drede.
> Iesus onazorus,
> Crucyefixus,
> Morcus, Andreus,
> God be oure spede! (ll. 417-25).

Stevens and Cawley suggest that the character's anachronistic conflation of prayers appears in "a York *Horae* of 1555." They actually quote the prayer

[189] A well-known night-spell is uttered by the Carpenter in Chaucer's *The Miller's Tale* (ll. 294-99):

> Therwith the nyght-spel seyde he anon-rightes
> On foure halves of the hous aboute,
> And on the thresshfold of the dore withoute
> Jhesu crist and seinte benedight,
> Blesse this hous from every wikked wight,
> For nyghtes verye, the white pater-noster! (Chaucer).

they suggest as the source for the shepherd's words: "In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. | Marcus, Mattheus, Lucas, Joannes. Amen. | Jesus nazarenus crucifixus, Rex Judeorum, Fili Dei, | miserere me. Amen." (vol. 2: 489-90 note to ll. 417-25). Although no further information is provided by the editors on this *Horae*, in all likelihood they are referring the *Horae Eboracenses* or *The Prymer or Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary, according to the use of the Illustrious Church of York with other devotions as they were used by the lay-folk in the Northern Province in the XVth and XVIth Centuries*.[190] The *Horae Eboracenses* prayer is actually a longer formula recorded in the section "Formulae Commune" and may shed some light on the first part of Primus Pastor's spell in which he makes a cross for protection, since he and the other characters are afraid (ll. 417-21):[191]

> Per crucis hoc signum: fugiat procul omne malignum. Et per idem signum : saluetur quodque benignum. Per signum sancte crucis de inimicis nostris libera nos, Deus noster. In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum: redemisti me, Domine, Deus veritatis. Amen (26).

This prayer is actually very close to what Primus Pastor is trying to recite: with this sign of the cross, may all evil flee far away.

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[190] Quotations of the *Horae Eboracenses* are from M. A Wordsworth, ed. *Horae Eboracenses*. London: Andrews & Co, 1920. The preface to the edition reads that it "was designed to include all the (not very numerous) surviving editions printed in the sixteenth century, not omitting the fragments of one or two which had otherwise entirely perished. The plan proposed was to start with the very rare, or unique, *Horae* of 1536, the latest known text of Henry VIII's reign, as a basis, and to supplement it on the one hand by comparison with the smaller books issued under Philip and Mary in 1555 and 1556" (ix).

[191] For further discussion on these night spells, see William Munson. "The Layman's Prayer Contest of the Crossing Charms in the Towneley Shepherds' Plays." *Mediaevalia* 11 (1989): 187-201.

There are several instances in which the aforementioned prayer-spell is used for protection, guidance or assistance. For example, in 1879, Richard Strange in his book about the life of St Thomas of Hereford, recorded that, according to the chronicles, St Thomas (ca. 1218-1282), also known as Thomas de Cantilupe, had recited these prayers before he died:

> [...] he, unmindful of all worldly things, invoked the Spirit both of light and life, by a Veni Creator Spiritus, to be assistant to him in this last conflict against the spirits of darkness, when both light and life lie at the stake. This done, he armed himself with the sign of the Cross, or ensign of Christianity, as formidable to the infernal powers as comfortable to a parting soul; who whilst he consigned himself by it over to Almighty God, he added these devout expressions, taught him probably in his childhood, Per signum Crucis de inimicis nostris liberanos Deus noster; and again, Per Crucis hoc signum fugiat procul omne malignum; and lastly, Per idem signum salvetur omne benignum (122-23).

On the Castilian side, monk and historian Enrique Flórez de Setién y Huidobro recorded in 1752 in one of his works the existence of a marble inscription from the year 1252 found in Sanlúcar la Mayor, Seville, with a similar formula:

> "PER CRUCIS HOC SIGNUM FUGIAT PRO[CUL]… [OMN]E MALIGNVM EN ERA MCCLII TOME ACABO DE LABRAR ESTA EGLEJA; vol. 9: 140" (Through the Sign of the Cross, may all evil be put to flight; in the year 1252 Tomé[192] concluded the erection of this church).

[192] The works of this Tomé, allegedly a master stonemason, were recorded by Eugenio de Llaguno y Amírola. *Noticias de los Arquitectos y Arquitectura de España desde su Restauración*. Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1829. 40-43.

Interestingly, the cleric in his chronicle explains that, since the inscription predates the conquest of Seville (1248), this proves that the Moors allowed its erection (vol. 4: 149). A somewhat similar inscription is also found in the 1526 Funeral Chapel Saint-Croix called the Cosquyno Chapel in Yonne, France. It also appears in the *Ancrene Wisse*[193] or the "Anchoresses' Guide" written sometime between 1225 and 1240:

> Crux fugat omne malum.
> Crux est reparatio rerum.
> Per crucis hoc signum
> Fugiat procul omne malignum.
> Et per idem signum,
> Salvetur quodque benignum.
>
> TRANS.:
> The Cross puts to flight all evil.
> The Cross is the restorer of things.
> By this sign of the Cross
> May all evil flee far away.
> And by this very symbol,
> May whatever is good be saved.

The link with the York *Book of Hours* and sorcery is actually found in Reginald Scot's (1538?-1599) work *Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft* (published 1584), a partially skeptical book envisioned as a depiction of medieval witchcraft. The author sustained that the prosecution of those accused of wizardry was unfounded and un-Christian and, consequently, to be rejected by reason and by religion. His goal was to thwart the persecu-

[193] The work is actually a revision of an earlier one called the *Ancrene Riwle* or "Anchorites' Rule," a book of religious instruction for three noble sisters who enclosed themselves as anchoresses in the West Midlands between Worcester and Wales. The author is thought to be an Augustinian canon or a Dominican friar. Quotes and translations to this work are from Robert Hasenfratz, ed. *Ancrene Wisse. TEAMS. 2000. Middle English Texts Series*. Web.

tion of those who were usually credited with being witches, namely poor, aged, simple persons. In his opinion, the maintenance of the superstition was to be blamed largely on the Roman Catholic Church. In his work he claims that:

> Whosoever shall carry this writing about him, shall not dye any evill death, if he beleeve in Christ, and in all perplexities he shall soone be delivered, neither let him fear any danger at all. Fons alpha & omega † figa † figalis † Sabbaoth † Emmanuel † Adonai † o † Neray † Elay † [...]he † Rentone † Neger † Sahe † Pangeton † Commen † a † g † l † a † Mattheus † Marcus † Lucas † Iohannes † † † titulus triumphalis † Iesus Nasareuus rex Iudaeorum † ecce dominicae crucis signnm † fugite partes adversae, vicit leo de tribu Iudae, radix, David, aleluijah, Kyrie eleeson, Christe eleeson, pater noster, ave Maria, & ne nos, & veniat super nos salutare tuum. Oremus, &c. (131).

The order in which the Evangelists appear here is not the same as that of the *Horae Eboracenses* which has Marcus, Mattheus, Lucas, Joannes, but Scot claims that his source is the York *Book of Hours* itself:

> I find in a Primer intituled The houres of our Lady, after the use of the church of Yorke, printed anno 1516, a charme with this titling in red letters; To all them that afore this image of pity devoutly shall say five Pater nosters, five Aves, and one Credo, pitiously beholding these armes of Christs passion, Note in marg: If the party faile in the number, he may go whistle for a pardon are granted thirty two thousand seven hundred fifty five years of pardon. It is to be thought that this pardon was granted in the time of pope Boniface the nineth; for Platina saith that the pardons were sold so cheape (Chapter 9: 131).

All obtainable copies of Scot's book were apparently burned on the accession of James I in 1603 (Almond 2). King James felt sufficiently knowledgeable about witchcraft since in 1597 he had written *Daemononlogie*, a

treatise on the matter. Witchcraft was still an issue in Stuart England in so far as many, like Scot, did not share the same views as James.[194]

Thus, only when food and drink are forgotten in the dramas, the shepherds' souls and minds are ready to decode the symbols, and all references to the superstitious and pagan practices disappear as the process of enlightenment is completed and they learn that Jesus has been born. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, the characters undergo a spiritual transformation and are turned into devout Christians, leaving behind their old customs to become spokesmen of the message of salvation.

[194] For further reading on the different perspectives on witchcraft in James's time, see for instance James Sharpe. *Witchcraft in Early Modern England*. New York: Routledge 2013. 14-27.

Chapter 5
The Light and Darkness Dichotomy

References to light and darkness are recurrent in the plays. According to Luke's Gospel, the story of the Annunciation to shepherds takes place at night: "et pastores erant in regione eadem vigilantes et custodientes vigilias noctis supra gregem suum; 2:8" (and there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night). The fact that the shepherds in the plays watch over their sheep during the night is directly acknowledged in several works, which is reinforced by the many references to sleeping. For instance, in Fernández *Égloga o Farsa*, Macario cannot find his way because it is pitch dark:

> ¿Dó va el camino?
> ¿Por acá, o por allá?
> Por caridad me mostrá,
> que con la noche no atino (ll. 267-70)
>
> TRANS.:
> Where is the way?
> This way or that way?
> Please, show me,
> It's night and I can't find it

Metaphorically, Macario's inability to find his way and the lack of light stand for the characters' spiritual state in a world which awaits the salvific light of Christ. In *Auto o Farsa*, Llorente also mentions that the action is taking place at night: "¡Juro a diez! "Yo también siento | esta noche turbación; ll. 128-29" (I swear it to God! | I also feel | abashed tonight). In

Chester, the appearance of a great light in the middle of the night frightens the shepherds, as Secundus Pastor explains "and yett it is night, | yett seemes yt day nowe (ll. 308-9)." Garcius will also highlight these circumstances later; first he points out that the unidentified flying creature "came by night" (l. 398) and then, that the circumstances frightened him: "Before this night | was I never soe affright" (ll. 349-50).

The playwrights seem to reinforce this idea of gloom by setting the scene under adverse climatic conditions, namely, stormy cold weather. However, Luke's Gospel does not contain any references to bad weather and the Apocrypha do not mention these circumstances either. Actually, this situation is reversed as the news of the Birth are brought in. As Brotherton states when analyzing Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, "it is from this gloom that they [the shepherds'] will eventually and dramatically escape" (7), a fact that could be applied to the rest of the plays.

As soon as the message is delivered, the plays are suffused with light and all references to darkness are obliterated, signifying also that the characters are rescued from a spiritual forlornness and damnation and granted eternal bliss. This progression from darkness into light is found in the Lukan narrative which describes that "[. . .] et claritas Dei circumfulsit illos et timuerunt timore magno; 2:9" ([. . .] and the glory of the Lord shone round about them and they were terrified). Yet, as will be seen, it is in the liturgy of Advent and Christmas where this darkness-into-light development is most clearly established, a pattern which the plays seem to reproduce.

5.1 Bad Weather

The shepherds' complaints about bad weather are found in both the Castilian and the English traditions. The works of Fray Íñigo de Mendoza, Juan del Enzina, Lucas Fernández and López de Yanguas include adverse climatic conditions as a central element to the development of the plays. As regards the English practice, both *The Towneley First* and *Second Shepherds' Plays*, *The Chester Painters' Playe*, and *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* include this theme.

Many of the destructive natural phenomena employed by the playwrights are also found in the liturgical texts set aside for Ember week. As mentioned above in Chapter 4 with reference to the consumption of wine, the biblical text read as the first *Lectio* at Matins on Monday is Isaiah 28:1-3, in which the people of Ephraim's despicable practices are condemned. Furthermore, in the Lesson, Isaiah recalls how God will implacably exert His divine chastisement in the form of natural catastrophes and destructive climatic phenomena to those who do not follow His will:

> Ecce validus et fortis Dominus sicut impetus grandinis; turbo confringens, sicut impetus aquarum multarum inundantium et emissarum super terram spatiosam. Pedibus conculcabitur corona superbiae ebriorum Ephraim (*Breviarium Romanum* 158).
>
> TRANS.: Behold the Lord is mighty and strong, as a tempest of hail, and as a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, sent forth over the breadth of the land. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under foot.

As discussed above, this week in the calendar prescribes fasting and prayer, including the ban on alcoholic drinks such as wine. Therefore, the play-

wrights seem to have included this topic as a reminder that sinful practices may unleash God's wrath in the shape of meteorological phenomena. Nonetheless, as will be seen below, the liturgy of Advent is one of hope and provides moral grounding to those who await the coming of the Messiah. In this sense, by means of Old Testament and New Testament readings, the liturgical texts point out that God will also protect and bring eternal bliss to those who accept His will, which is the final message conveyed in all plays.

Examples of bad weather are found in Fray Íñigo's *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*, in which a shepherd recounts how he got really wet as he witnessed the coming of the angel under miserable weather conditions: a raging blizzard ("ventiscava", *copla* 153, l. 1), a strong northern wind was blowing ("regañon", "cierço", "gallego", *copla* 153, ll. 3-4):

> El tempero ventiscava
> de cabo del regañón;
> el çierço, asmo que elava;
> el gallego lloviznava
> por todo mi çamarrón (*copla* 153).
>
> TRANS.:
> There was a raging blizzard
> Brought in by the *regañón*
> The *cierzo* brought sleet
> And the *gallego* some rain[195]
> And my sheepskin coat was soaking all over."

[195] "Regañón," "cierzo" and "gallego" are northern winds, but especially "gallego" is the way in which people from Castile call the northern and usually moist wind that blows from the neighboring region, Galicia. This seems to be an attempt at identifying the shepherds with that specific Spanish area.

Similarly, in López de Yanguas's *Égloga de la Natividad*, one of the shepherds recounts that while the people of the area witnessed the coming of the heavenly messengers they were snowed in by a raging blizzard ("revuelto en ventisca;" l. 79). Nonetheless, Juan del Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias* stands out among the Castilian pieces since the whole play hinges upon the theme of torrential rains—hence the title—as the author remarks in the introduction:

> Égloga trobada por Juan del Enzina, representada la noche de Navidad; en la qual a quatro pastores, JUAN, MIGUELLEJO, RODRIGACHO y ANTÓN llamados, que sobre los infortunios de las grandes lluvias y la muerte de un sacristán se razonavan.
>
> TRANS.: Eclogue composed by Juan del Enzina, enacted on Christmas Eve, in which four shepherds called Juan, Miguellejo, Rodrigacho and Antón, reflect upon the misfortunes caused by the heavy rains and upon the death of a sacristan.

The play actually depicts the frantic plight of a world that flounders without God's mercy and light. As the play opens, Juan and Miguellejo join Rodrigacho and Antón in their shelter where they find protection from the prevailing heavy rains. Interestingly, their answer to the current state of affairs is a reminder of the aforementioned liturgical text, Isaiah 28:1-3, as they believe that what is happening to them is a sort of divine punishment (ll. 51-52). This idea is reinforced when they compare what is happening to the local people to the disasters the biblical Egyptians had to endure (l.71). The shepherds' endurance is coming to an end, which is expressed by means of swearwords:

> Agua y nieve

> y vientos bravos, corrutos;
> ¡reniego de tiempos putos!
> ¡Y ha dos meses a que llueve! (ll. 92-96).
>
> TRANS.:
> Rain and snow
> and fierce winds, corrupt;
> I repudiate this son-of-a-bitch weather!
> It's been raining for two months!

There are similar complaints about the weather in the English shepherds' plays. For instance, in *The Chester Painters' Playe*, Primus Pastor explains his miserable situation—and that of his sheep—due to the storms:

> On wouldes have I walked wylde
> under buskes my bowre to bylde,
> from styffe stormes my sheepe to shilde,
> my seemely wedders to save.
> From comlye Cowaye unto Clyde
> under tyldes them to hyde,
> A better shepperd on no syde,
> Noe yearthly man maye have.
> For with walkynge werye I have mee rought;
> besydes the suche my sheepe I sought.
> My taytfull tuppes are in my thought (ll. 1-11).

Primus Pastor, like many of his counterparts, arrogantly boasts of being the best shepherd in the area (l. 7) as he allegedly takes good care of his sheep and tries to build a shelter ("bowre" or "tydes;" ll. 2, 6) for them as protection from the "styffe stormes" (l. 3). The shepherds' endeavors to find protection mirrors the continuous references to God as shelter in the liturgy for this season in both the Missal and in the Breviary. For example, the Collect of the Mass on the first Sunday of Advent reads: "Excita, quaesumus Domine, potentiam tuam, et veni: ut ab imminentibus peccatorum nostrorum periculis, etmereamur protegente eripi, te liberante sal-

vari; *Missale Romanum* 1" (Stir up Thy power, we beseech Thee, O Lord, and come: that from the threatening dangers of our sins we may deserve to be rescued by Thy protection, and to be saved by Thy deliverance).

However, this protective God may also be responsible for a raging wrath as the first *Lectio* on the Second Saturday of Advent at Matins reflects:

> Quia posuisti civitatem in tumulum, urbem fortem in ruinam, domum alienorum: ut non sit civitas, et in sempiternum non aedificetur. Super hoc laudabit te populus fortis; civitas gentium robustarum timebit te: Quia factus es fortitudo pauperi, fortitudo egeno in tribulatione sua, spes a turbine, umbraculum ab aestu (*Breviarium Romanorum* 150-1).
>
> TRANS.: For thou hast reduced the city to a heap, the strong city to ruin, the house of strangers, to be no city, and to be no more built up forever. Therefore shall a strong people praise thee, the city of mighty nations shall fear thee. Because thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress: a refuge from the whirlwind, a shadow from the heat.

Nevertheless, the shepherds' protective initiatives become ironic as the plays disclose their real nature. Primus Pastor in *Chester*, for instance, appears to have great knowledge of natural remedies to cure his sick sheep (ll.17-41), but the truth is that they are dying due to the rot[196] and other diseases, but also due to his carelessness—he is more interested in feeding himself and his sheep are actually under the surveillance of his unwaged servant, Garcius.

[196] As mentioned above, the sheep in the *First Shepherds' Play* are also dying, and characters claim that they eat "moton | Of an ewe that was roton" (ll. 220-21).

Likewise, Bonifacio's boastful comments in Lucas Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa* resembles Primus Pastor in *The Painters' Playe*. Like his English counterpart, he also claims that he takes good care of his sheep, and that he is the best shepherd of the lot: "siempre so el mejor del hato; l. 45" (I always standout among my fellow herdsmen), although he is not referring to his gifts as a herdsman, but to his physical appearance: he is quite vain and states that he is a womanizer (ll. 21-30). The rustic is also very proud of his partying abilities including dancing, singing and playing wind instruments at weddings and local festivities of all sorts (ll. 31-40). He is also the best accessorized, and after giving a long catalog of all the accoutrements he possesses—a vest, a pullover, a sort of hood, a cape, two pouches, etc.—(ll. 50-60) he exclaims in delight "¡So gran pastor de ganado! l. 60" (I am a great herdsman!). However, he also fails to take care of his sheep and proves to be inefficient when trying to find protection not only for his animals, but also for himself.

The atmosphere at the opening of Lucas Fernández's *Auto o Farsa* is not different from the rest of dramas. The author introduces the play as well as the characters with explicit references to the meteorological circumstances and explains how the extreme situation is affecting the herdsmen: " [. . .] Entra primero Pascual, muerto de frío, blasfemando de los temporales, y doliéndose de los ganados y fructos de la tierra" (Enters Pascual first, extremely cold and blaspheming in relation to the tempests and very concerned about the cattle and the fruits of the land). Pascual's opening lines insist on how cold and humid the night is and then he goes

on to explain that the flock may perish if it is not taken immediately to a meadow or prairie beyond the river (ll. 4-10), which the shepherds never do:

> ¡Hora! Muy huerte llentío
> haze aquesta madrugada.
> ¡Rabia! ¡Y quán terrible elada!
> ¡Juro a mí que haze gran frío!
> El ganado mamantío
> cuydo que se ha de perder
> si no le echan a pascer
> allá ayuso, allende el río,
> en algún prado valdío (ll. 1-9).
>
> TRANS.:
> Yay! The night dew is intense
> This night
> Rage! And what a terrible frost!
> I swear it's bitterly cold!
> The nursing ewes
> Will be lost I fear
> If they are not taken beyond the river
> To a vacant lot.

A play worth examining is *Auto dos Cuatro Tempos* by the Portuguese author Gil Vicente,[197] as it is a clear example of a contemporary work that hinges upon the weather topic. Actually, the shepherds are named after the four seasons, a choice that may be linked with the liturgy of Advent, since the so-called Ember Days are in fact known as the "quattuor anni tempora" (four seasons of the year), or formerly as the "jejunia quattuor temporum" (fasts of the four seasons).[198] Invierno's (Winter) complaints about

[197] All quotations from Gil Vicente's plays are from Gil Vicente. *Compilaçam de Todas las Obras de Gil Vicente*. Ed. Maria Leonor Carvalhão Buescu. 2 vols. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da moneda, 1983.

[198] For further information on the importance of the calendar in the composition of Gil Vicente's works and the debate of the four seasons see María José Palla. *A Roda do*

the bad weather are similar to the ones found in the Castilian and English dramas: "¡La lluvia, cómo desgrana! | [. . .] ¡Mal grado haya la nieve!; vol 1: 85" (The rain, it wears one down! | How despicable the snow is!) to what he adds later that due to "granizo," "lluvia," and "ventisco; vol. 1: 86" (fog, hale, and strong winds), he has lost track of his animals: "mis ovejas y carneros: | de niebla no sé qué es de ellos; vol. 1: 86" (My sheep and rams: | It is so foggy I don't know their whereabouts). The situation, as in other plays, is affecting the shepherd physically and emotionally, and he even fears the cattle may die:

> Las uñas trayo perdidas
> Los pies llenos de frieras;
> Mil ravias de mil maneras
> Trayo en el cuerpo metidas.
> Tengo el hielo en los huessos;
> Muérenseme los corderos (vol. 1: 86).
>
> TRANS.:
> I have lost my nails
> My feet are chapped
> I am so full of rage
> Inside my body.
> I have ice in my bones;
> The lambs are dying.

A very similar situation is found in *The Second Shepherds' Play*, in which the unremitting "stormes" and "Tempest" (l. 10) and the cold weather cause distress in the characters' physical and emotional state. The shepherd that opens the play claims that his "legys thay fold" (l. 5) and that his "fyngers ar chappyd" but also that he is "lappyd | In Sorrow" (ll. 8-9):

Tempo: O Calendário Folclórico e Litúrgico no Teatro de Gil Vicente. Lisboa: Instituto de Estudos Medievais, 2006. 81-82.

Lord what these weders are cold
and I am yll happyd.
I am nere hand dold,
So long haue I nappyd;
My legys thay fold,
my fyngers ar chappyd.
It is not as I wold,
For I am al lappyd
In sorrow.
In stormes and tempest
Now in the eest now in the west,
Wo is hym has neuer rest
Myd day nor morrow!
Bot we sely husbandys
That walkys on the moore,
In fayth we ar nere handys
Outt of the doore (ll. 1-17).

Later on in the play, Mak will claim that his mischievous actions are the result of his infirm state, a situation that has brought him so low: "Bot a sekenes I feyll | That haldys me full haytt" (ll. 328-29).

Vicente's work also resembles *The Towneley First Shepherds' Play* which opens with Primus Pastor complaining about the weather, a situation that is affecting him greatly:

Now in hart, now in heyll
Now in weytt, now in blast;
Now in care,
Now in comforth agane;
Now is fayre, now is rane;
Now is hart full fane,
And after full sare. (ll. 7-13).

However, all these symptoms eventually disappear after their awareness of Christ's Birth. In fact, the liturgy of Advent highlights the image of Jesus as a physical and moral healer. This idea is alluded to in the Breviary,

on the fourth Sunday of Advent at Matins during the first Lesson (first Nocturn). The references to the sick parts of the body recall significantly those mentioned in the dramatic texts:

> Confortate manus dissolutas, et genua debilia roborate. Dicite pusillanimis: Confortamini, et nolite timere: ecce Deus vester ultionem adducet retributionis; Deus ipse veniet, et salvabit vos. Tunc aperientur oculi caecorum, et aures surdorum patebunt (*Breviarium Romanum* 166).
>
> TRANS.: Strengthen ye the feeble hands, and confirm the weak knees. Say to the fainthearted: Take courage, and fear not: behold your God will bring the revenge of recompense: God himself will come and will save you. Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Going back to *Invierno* in Vicente's play, the character's sorrow is shown in his moody song about his beloved who dwells in Seville and belongs to another shepherd: "En Sevilla quedan presos | por cordón de mis cabellos | los mis amores. | ¡Mal ha Ya quien los embuelve!; vol 1: 6" (In Seville are imprisoned | Tied with the cords of my hair | My loves. | Shame on those who embrace them now!). He himself realizes that this is not the best time to be in love, given the circumstances, and he curses himself for having such feelings when all animals are in such peril:

¡Hi de puta! ¡Qué tempero
para andar enamorado,
repicado y quebrado,
con la hija del herrero!
Los borregos de mis amos,
La burra, hato y cabaña,
Con la tempestad tamaña
No sé a dó los dexamos (vol. 2: 87).

TRANS.:
Son of a bitch! What a horrible
Weather to be in love,
Broken into pieces and smashed,
With the goldsmith's daughter!
My masters' yearling sheep
The donkey, the herd and the cattle
With this huge storm
I don't know where we left them.

The curses the shepherd utters are somehow similar to those found in Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias* (ll. 92-96). The difference lies in that, as opposed to Enzina's work, the Portuguese playwright introduces the topic of unrequited love in a religious play.

In *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*, the shepherds are also concerned about a particularly chilly night, a fact that is reinforced later by Mary, who laments that the "Maker off man and hy Kyng of blys" (l. 276) may have been born under such cold weather conditions: "A, Josoff, husebond, my chyld waxith cold, | And we have noo fyre to warme hym with" (ll. 268-69). The theme of adversity is taken up again in the somewhat naïve speeches dealing with the gift offering, as one shepherd offers his hat (ll. 298-304) while the other hands Jesus a pair of mittens:

> Hayle be thow, Lorde, ouer watur and landis
> For thy cumyng all we ma make myrthe
> Haue here my mittens to pytt on þi hondis;
> Othur treysure haue I non to present the with (ll. 305-8).

Yet, there are positive weather images in the plays as well. Interestingly, in *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad*, Enzina includes the liturgical idea of Jesus as the purifying rain when he explains that He descended from the heavens through Mary's virginal womb to cleanse the evil derived from original sin:

> En un vientre virginal,
> como lluvia descendió,
> para remediar el mal
> del pecado original
> qu'el primer padre nos dio (ll. 32-36).
>
> TRANS.:
> In a virginal womb,
> (He) descended like rain,
> To provide remedy for the evil
> Caused by original sin
> Brought by the first father.

This positive weather image associated with God in the play is actually recurrent in the liturgy of Advent. Thus, the same divine power responsible for the lethal weather conditions is also depicted as soothing rain that will comfort people both physically and spiritually. The catechetical message conveyed is that God, through Jesus, is available to everyone provided that they abide by the admonitions set by the Church and gain sufficient moral grounding to be worthy of the Savior. Thus, on the Saturday preceding the first Sunday of Advent, at Vespers, the following text is recited responsively, imploring the heavens to "drop Jesus" as if He were rain:

V: Rorate cæli désuper, et nubes pluant justum.
R: Aperiatur terra et gérminet Salvatórem (*Breviarium Romanum* 132).

TRANS.:
V: Drop down, ye heavens, from above,
R: And let the earth be opened, and bud forth the Savior.

The origin of "Rorate cæli desuper, et nubes pluant justum" is Isaiah 45:8. It was frequently sung as a plainsong at Mass and in the Divine Office during Advent and it expresses the Patriarchs and Prophets's longing for the coming of the Messiah, a longing which is symbolically applicable to the Church. It is worth noting that Isaiah 45:8 is recited daily during Advent, as the versicle and response after the hymn at Vespers. In addition, the text is set aside as the Introit for the Masses on the Fourth Sunday and on Wednesday during Ember Week. Additionally, it is recited for the feast of the Expectation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (December 18). It is also the first antiphon at Lauds for the Tuesday preceding Christmas. This is the first of a special set of antiphons (there are five sets in total)[199] recited on the seven days preceding Christmas Eve.

Another antiphon belonging to this first set contains some images related to the weather, and is taken from Deuteronomy 32:2: "Concrescat in pluvia doctrina mea fluat ut ros eloquium meum quasi imber super herbam et quasi stillae super gramina" (My teaching shall drop as the rain, and our God shall come down as the dew).[200] Therefore, it could be stated

[199] These antiphons begin on December 17 and are subject to some changes if they coincide with certain feasts. For full explanation on their use, and their relation to the O Antiphons, see John Marquess of Bute, trans. *The Roman Breviary*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1908. 243-6.

[200] This antiphon is recited if Christmas Eve falls on a Saturday. See Marquess of Bute 246.

that this double liturgical conception of the heavens as merciless and merciful is also conveyed in the plays. As a matter of fact, the heavens in the form of storm, snow, and other adversities are literally and emotionally killing life on earth but, at the same time, the news of salvation disclosed by the heavenly creatures and salvation itself—which is metaphorically conveyed in the liturgy as a soothing rain—also have their source in heaven.

5.2 Light into Darkness

Light pervades as the news of the Birth are brought in, literally lighting up the plays. As seen in Chapter 4, the shepherds fail to understand the mysterious nature of light because it is night and the weather situation only intensifies the notion of darkness and, therefore, no luminescence is expected. On the other hand, the light is associated with the angel, an alien creature to them. All these circumstances cause fear and a great distress in the characters. In the English works, the star provides the first source of brightness. With the exception of *N-Town*, where the source of the light is not mentioned, the rest of plays include the star feature. In *The First Shepherds' Play*, after the rustics understand that the creature was an angel and that he was in fact telling them about the exact nature of the Baby and about His location (ll. 458-61), the Second Shepherd also spots the star and assumes that they have to follow it: "We must seke hym, I you warne; | That betokyns yond starne | That standys yonder oute" (ll. 462-

64). Because they are already enlightened, the Third Shepherd is capable of grasping the beauty of the light:[201]

> It was meruell to se,
> So bright as it shone;
> I wold haue trowyd, veraly
> It had bene thoner-flone,
> Bot I sagh with myn ee
> as I lenyd to this stone (ll. 465-70).

In *The Second Shepherds' Play*, it is the First Shepherd who determines that it is a star, and uses almost the same words as his counterpart in *The First Shepherds' Play*: "That betokyns yond starne; | Let vs seke hym there" (ll. 944-45). In *Chester*, as explained in Chapter 4, both the light associated with the angel and his song produce fear in the characters, a situation that gives rise to a rather comic scene. Thus, the First Shepherd describes the light as being rather intense: "What is all this light here | blasses soe bright here | on my black beard?" (ll. 300-3). The fact that it was pitch dark before the appearance of the light is also one of his concerns: "and yett it is night, | yett seemes yt day nowe" (ll. 308-9). The Third Shepherd finally figures out that the intense light comes from a star: "from a starre streaming | it to me stroacke" (ll. 316-17); then, Garcius explains that he is determined to find it: "That starre if it stand | to seek will I fond" (ll. 318-19) and finally locates it, and compares it to the sun, given its brightness:

> A, Godes mightis!
> In yonder starre light is;

[201] For an analysis of the concept of beauty in English and Castilian pastoral dramas, see Vicente Chacón Carmona. "The Concept of Beauty in Medieval Nativities from England and Spain." *Mirabilia* 18.1 (2014):197-205. Web.

of the sonne this sight is,
as yt nowe seems (ll. 324-27).

York opens with the Second Shepherd citing Balaam's prophetical account[202] in which the prophet foretold that God would send a special star to announce the Savior's Birth to the world: "Balaham, brothir, me haue herde say, | A sterne shulde schyne and signifie | With lightfull lemes like any day" (ll. 13-16). Then the Third Shepherd actually petitions God to display that light to them for that would mean that their salvation is at hand:

A, mercifull maker, mekill is thy myght,
That þus will to þi seruauntes see,
Might we ones loke vppon that light
Gladder bretheren myght no men be.
I haue herde say, by þat same light
The childre of Israell shulde be made free,
The force of the feende to felle in fighte,
And all his pouer excluded shulde be (ll. 25-32).

Later, the Third Shepherd describes the angel's light as a "meruayle" (l. 56), and acknowledges the star that will lead the way to the Manger: "Hym for to fynde has we no drede, | I sall you telle achesoune why: | 3one sterne to þat lorde sall vs lede" (ll. 79-81).

In *Coventry*, the shepherds also interpret the light and immediately associate it with prophetic accounts:

Brethur, loke vp and behold
Whatt thyng ys yondur thatt schynith;
Asse long ase eyuer I haue wachid my fold.
Yett sawe I neyuer soche a syght in fyld.
A, ha, now ys cum the tyme þat old fathurs hath told,

[202] The prophetical references in the plays are dealt with in Chapter 6.

> Thatt in the wynturs nyght soo cold
> A chyld of meydyn borne be he wold
> In whom all profeciys schalbe fullfyld (ll. 229-36).

After the angels sing the *Gloria*, the First Shepherd concludes that the star is the evidence that the long-waited Messiah has arrived: "Goddis sun ys cum whom we haue lokid for long, | Asse sygnefyith thys star þat we do see" (ll. 254-55). Later on, once the shepherds have gone off stage, the First Prophet will refer again to the light the shepherds had seen:

> This othur nyght soo cold
> Hereby apon a wolde,
> Scheppardis wachyng there fold
> In the nyght soo far
> To them aperid a star,
> And eyuer yt drev them nar,
> Wyche star the did behold
> Bryghter, þei sey, M folde
> Then the sun so clere[203]
> In his mydday spere;
> And the these tythyngis tolde (ll. 385-95).

The Prophet's account is an amplification of Luke 2:20 and seems to indicate that he overheard the shepherds' singing and jubilation as they described the star and praised the King of Israel (see l. 401). However, no star appears in Luke's Gospel (2:9) which only refers to "claritas Dei" (the brightness of God). Critics point out that the star in these dramas is modeled upon the Magi,[204] whose biblical source is Matthew 2:9-11:

> [. . .] qui cum audissent regem abierunt et ecce stella quam viderant in oriente antecedebat eos usque dum veniens staret supra ubi erat puer videntes autem stellam gavisi sunt gaudio magno valde et

[203] A thousand times brighter than the sun so clear.

[204] See Stevens and Cawley vol. 2: 490 note to l. 463 and Lumiansky & Mills vol. 2: 115, note l. 316.

> intrantes domum invenerunt puerum cum Maria matre eius et procidentes adoraverunt eum.
>
> TRANS.: [. . .] When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him.

Actually, as in the case of the Magi, the star guides the rustics to Bethlehem; that is the case in *Chester*:

> PRIMUS PASTOR
> Nowe folowe we the starre that shines,
> tyll we come to that holy stable.
> To Bethlem boyne the lymes;
> followe we yt withowt any fable (ll. 452-55).

In the case of the Castilian texts, one of Fray Íñigo's shepherds is woken up by what he describes as "claridad relampaguera; *copla* 151" (lighting-like brightness). Similarly, in Fernández's *Auto o Farsa*, a bewildered Llorente acknowledges the fact that the sky is no longer dark as he becomes aware of a starry night:

> LLORENTE
> [. . .] Mirá, mirá bien, moçuelo,
> las relumbrantes estrellas.
> ¡Juri a mí!, que están muy bellas;
> Acá dan luz en el suelo (ll. 136-43).
>
> TRANS.:
> [. . .] Look, look well, boy,
> At the bright stars.
> Yikes! They are so pretty;
> They light the ground down here.

Perhaps it is not coincidental that in Enzina's *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad* the one who spots the star is a shepherd called Mateo since, as said above, Matthew provides the biblical source:

> MATEO
> Y tú, Juan, que las estrellas
> oteas de hito en hito,
> ven, verás la mayor dellas,
> luzero de las donzellas
>
> TRANS.:
> And you, Juan, you that stare
> At the stars from every milestone,
> Come and see the largest one,
> The morning star of maidens,[205]
> With her Son, so holy.

Likewise, in López de Yanguás *Égloga de la Natividad*, Jesus is also described as the morning star: "[...] es nascido tan claro luzero | que viene a las gentes poner en abrigo; 15-16" ([...] such a bright morning star has been born | That He comes to provide shelter to people).

5.3 Light and Darkness in the Liturgical Texts

The images of light override any previous references to darkness in the liturgical texts set aside for Advent and Christmas. In addition, the external symbolism of the Church during the season reflects this light-into-darkness progression. As will be discussed in Chapter 7 with regard to music, the Advent period is characterized by a mixture of feelings of joy, expectation and sorrow. During this waiting time until Christmas, or-

[205] The text also recalls Revelation 12:1, which reads: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."

namentation and lighting including flower ornaments or candles are not displayed in churches. It is not until Ember Wednesday, that is, during the third week of Advent, that lights become an ostensible part of liturgy again. Thus, the Mass is sung early in the morning to commemorate the Mystery of the Annunciation. The temples are lit up with candle-light as a reminder that the world remained in darkness until the coming of Jesus, who is regarded as the light of the world. This Mass in question is also known the "Missa Aurea" or "Golden Mass,[206]" "Rorate Mass[207]" or "Messiah Mass."

The Mass on Ember Friday, also known as "Missa Prope es tu[208]" expresses in the Introit (taken from Psalm 118:151-152) the idea that Jesus's coming is at hand, and that the testimonies offered by various Old Testament prophecies and texts are just about to come true. In the Communion, images of light are employed as a token of the coming of the Lord. The text chosen is Zachariah 14:5, 6: "Ecce Dominus veniet et omnes Sancti cum eo: et erit in die illa lux magna" (Behold the Lord shall come and all His Saints with Him: and there shall be in that day a great light). It is interesting to note that in Fray Íñigo's work, there is a direct reference to the story of Zacharias and to the Divine Office:

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[206] The reason why it is called the Golden Mass is not clear, but it may be due to the fact that in the Middle Ages the whole Mass or at least the initial letters in the missal were written in gold. See Adrian Nocent. *The Liturgical Year*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1977. 138-52.

[207] It is called Rorate Mass after the first words of the Introit: "Rorate Coeli Rorate, coeli, desuper, et nubes pluant iustum" (Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just).

[208] After the Introit which begins "Prope es tu, Domine, et omnes viae tuae veritas" (Taken from Psalm 118:151-52).

> Jura hago que ismagino,
> aunque nesçio rabadán,
> que éste a Zacharías vino
> en el ofiçio divino
> a dezille lo de Juan (copla 132).
>
> TRANS.:
> What I reckon
> In spite of being a foolish master shepherd
> is that he [the angel] came to Zacharias
> During the Divine Office
> to tell him about John.

In addition, the new atmosphere is not only reflected in the abundance of light, but also in the landscape, which both in the plays and in the liturgy undergo a positive transformation. In the Breviary, the fourth Sunday of Advent announces a great change that will take place when the Messiah arrives, as the first Lesson at Matins (first Nocturn) indicates:

> Laetabitur deserta et invia, et exsultabit solitudo, et florebit quasi lilium. Germinans germinabit, et exsultabit laetabunda et laudans: gloria Libani data est ei, decor Carmeli et Saron; ipsi videbunt gloriam Domini, et decorem Dei nostri. (Isaiah 35:1-4; *Breviarium Romanum* 165).
>
> TRANS.: The land that was desolate and impassable shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice, and shall flourish like the lily. It shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise: the glory of Libanus is given to it: the beauty of Carmel, and Saron, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the beauty of our God.

As in the prophetic text, the landscape or the wilderness[209] becomes a fruitful, lively and exceedingly jubilant field in many of the plays. As seen above in Chapter 4, one of the most explicit examples is Fernández's

[209] The second Lesson during of first Nocturn, also set aside from Isaiah (35: 7-10) deals with the great transformation of the landscape linked to the idea of ever-lasting joy.

Auto o Farsa del Nascimiento in which the place becomes a pleasant bucolic prairie with scented flowers and happy animals (ll. 145-52). In Fray Íñigo's *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*, the barren land is transformed into a fruitful "verde pradera; copla 151" (green prairie) in which there are "ovejas parideras; *copla* 152" (sheep giving birth) while the angels sing. However, at this point the shepherds are still blind to the truth and will only understand the reason for these circumstances later. The liturgy, however, insists that God Himself will open people's eyes and enlighten their minds, as the fifth Lesson at Matins, on the fourth Sunday of Advent highlights drawing on different biblical texts:[210]

> Causa autem reparationis nostrae non est nisi misericordia Dei: quem non diligeremus, nisi prius nos ipse diligeret, et tenebras ignorantiae nostrae, suae veritatis luce discuteret. Quod per sanctum Isaiam Dominus denuntians, ait: Adducam caecos in viam quam ignorabant, et semitas quas nesciebant, faciam illos calcare: faciam illis tenebras in lucem, et prava in directa. Haec verba faciam illis, et non relinquam eos. Et iterum: Inventus sum, inquit, a non quaerentibus me, et palam apparui iis qui me non interrogabant (*Breviarium Romanum* 167).
>
> TRANS.: Our restoration from the consequences of Adam's fall is sheer mercy of God, and nothing else; we should not have loved Him unless He had first loved us[211] and scattered the darkness of our ignorance by the light of His truth. This the Lord promised by the mouth of Isaiah, where He saith,[212] I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and I will lead them in paths that they have not known I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them. And again, I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me.

[210] Isaiah 65:1-2; Romans 10:20.
[211] John 1:4-19.
[212] Isaiah 42:16.

Again, in the sixth Lesson, the same notions of light and knowledge appear, this time in relation to the flames of a candle and connecting it to divine love:

> Diligendo itaque nos Deus, ad imaginem suam nos reparat: et ut in nobis formam suae bonitatis inveniat, dat unde ipsi quoque quod operatur operemur, accendens scilicet mentium nostrorum lucernas, et igne nos suae caritatis inflammans, ut non solum ipsum, sed etiam quidquid diligit, diligamus (*Breviarium Romanum* 167).
>
> TRANS.: God reneweth His likeness in us. And, moreover, in order that He may find in us the reflection of His goodness, He giveth us that whereby to work along with Himself, (Who worketh all in all) lighting, as it were, candles in our dark minds, and kindling in us the fire of His love, to make us love not Himself only, but likewise, in Him, whatsoever He loveth.

Then, at None, 1 Corinthians 1:4 is read, thus reinforcing the same ideas:

> Itaque nolite ante tempus judicare, quoadusque veniat Dominus: qui et illuminabit abscondita tenebrarum, et manifestabit consilia cordium: et tunc laus erit unicuique a Deo (*Breviarium Romanum* 169).
>
> TRANS.: Therefore judge not before the time; until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise from God.

The liberation of the blind who had lived in darkness is also the focus on the last Tuesday of Advent. Thus, at Matins, Isaiah 42:5-7 is set aside to be read as the second Lesson:

> Ego Dominus vocavi te in justitia, et apprehendi manum tuam, et servavi te: et dedi te in fœdus populi, in lucem gentium, ut aperires oculos caecorum, et educeres de conclusione vinctum, de domo carceris sedentes in tenebris (*Breviarium Romanum* 171).
>
> TRANS.: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and held thine hand and kept thee, and given thee for a covenant of the peo-

> ple, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house.

The liturgy of Christmas continues with the binary light-darkness. At Vespers on Yule or Christmas Day the emphasis is obviously on the fact that Jesus, the Savior, is coming and that His kingdom is at hand. The hymn[213] at Vespers describes Jesus as "lumen, et splendor Patris; *Breviarium Romanum* 176" (The Father's Light and Splendor). The first Lesson is taken from Isaiah 9:1, and is particularly insistent on the contrast between darkness-light: "Populus qui ambulabat in tenebris, vidit lucem magnam; habitantibus in regione umbrae mortis, lux orta est eis; *Breviarium Romanum* 180" (The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light). This is the same situation found in the dramas, for the shepherds in most plays are imbued in darkness when the plays open but eventually come across the heavenly light which announces the coming of Jesus and, by extension, the arrival of their salvation. This notion of liberation from darkness and of people being guided towards God's light is also the central message in the sixth Lesson, which is set apart from Colossians 1:13:

> Memento, cujus capitis et cujus corporis sis membrum. Reminiscere, quia erutus de potestate tenebrarum, translatus es in Dei lumen et regnum (*Breviarium Romanum* 184).
>
> TRANS.: Remember that it is He that hath delivered thee from the power of darkness and hath translated thee into God's light, and God's kingdom.

[213] According to Marquess of Bute, "This hymn, except the last verse, is of the Ambrosian school, though altered almost beyond recognition: the translation is extracted from the 'Hortus Animae"' (271 fn 6).

Light therefore, is associated with holiness, a question which is addressed during the second Vespers, when Psalm 109 is recited: "Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ in splendoribus sanctorum: ex útero ante lucíferum génui te; *Breviarium Romanum* 190" (With thee is the principality in the day of thy strength: in the brightness of the saints: from the womb before the day star I begot thee).[214] Since Christ stands for light, holiness and light are interdependent. What the Psalm highlights is that even if Jesus was born at night before the morning star appeared, the saints in heaven cast their holy light upon him while all remained dark.

The liturgical texts set aside for the Christmas Masses are also recurrent in light imagery. The celebration of the Nativity in the liturgy of the Church comprised, as it is the case nowadays, the Vigil Mass on December 24 ("In Vigilia Nativitate Domini") and the feast day itself celebrated on December 25 ("in Nativitate Domini"). The Church only celebrates one Mass on the 24, although the next day the number amounts to three: "Ad Primam Missam, in Nocte" (the Midnight Mass), "Ad Secundam Missam, in Aurora" (The Mass at Dawn) and "Ad Tertiam Missam in die Nativitatis Domini" (the Mass during Christmas Day or Yule Day).[215]

The Mass on the Vigil of the Nativity (December 24) or "Missa Hodie Scietis," implores God in the Gradual to shine upon the people of Israel;[216] the text is drawn from Exodus 1 and Psalm 79:

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[214] This is also the text recited as the Gradual.

[215] The pattern of three Masses was established by the 12th century. For further information on the origins of the three services, see McConnell; see also Fortescue.

[216] This Mass is named after the Introit, which reads: "Hodie scietis, quia veniet Dominus, et salvabit nos" (Exodus 16: 6-7).

> Hodie scietis, quia veniet Dominus, et salvabit nos: et mane videbitis gloriam eius.[217] V.: Qui regis Israel intende: qui deducis, velut ovem, Ioseph: qui sedes super Cherubim, appare coram Ephraim, Beniamin, et Manasse[218] (*Missale Romanum* 17).
>
> TRANS.: This day you shall know that the Lord will come and save us: and in the morning you shall see His glory. V.: Give ear, O Thou that rulest Israel: Thou that leadest Jeseph like a sheep, Thou that sittest upon the Cherubims, shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses.

The first Mass on Yule or Christmas Day (December 25) starts with the Midnight Mass ("Ad Primam Missam in Nocte"), also known as "Missa Dominus Dixit," since this is how the Introit commences (drawn from Psalm 2:7). This is precisely when the Incarnation is announced. The liturgy for the service repeatedly includes the theme of light into darkness, and makes clear that light on earth anticipates joy in Heaven in the same way as light in the plays anticipates the shepherds' joy. The Collect reads:

> Deus, qui hanc sacratissimam noctem veri luminis fecisti illustratione clarescere: da, quaesumus, ut cujus lucis mysteria in terra cognovimus, ejus quoque gaudiis in coelo perfruamur (*Missale Romanum* 21).
>
> TRANS.: God, who hast enlightened this most sacred night by the brightness of him who is the true light: grant, we beseech thee, that we who have known the mysteries of this Light on earth, may likewise come to the enjoyment of it in heaven.

The Gradual is taken from Psalm 109:1-3 which, as seen above, was the text recited in the Liturgy of the Hours during the second Vespers, and it stresses the idea that the light of the saints was shining when Jesus was born. After the Offertory, the preface to the Nativity is read, in which

[217] Exodus 16:6-7.
[218] Psalm 79:2-3.

Christ is described as the new light of God's glory which was made flesh to enlighten people's minds. Thus, as in the plays, the light of God's glory, both metaphorically and physically enlightens the faithful:[219]

> Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, aeterne Deus: Quia per incarnati Verbi mysterium nova mentis nostrae oculis lux tuae claritatis infulsit: ut, dum visibiliter Deum cognoscimus, per hunc in invisibilum amorem rapiamur (*Missale Romanum* 22).
>
> TRANS.: Father almighty, everlasting God, for through the Mystery of the Word made flesh, the new light of Thy glory hath shone upon the eyes of our mind, so that while we acknowledge God in visible form, we may through Him be drawn to the love of things invisible.

The Second Mass at Dawn ("Ad Secundam Missam in Aurora") is known as "Missa Lux Fulgebit" after the beginning of the Introit which announces the Incarnation and is taken from Isaiah 9 and Psalm 92. The text explains that the new light that will shine upon people, i.e., Jesus, will also be a symbol of peace and everlasting bliss:

> Lux fulgebit hodie super nos: quia natus est nobis Dominus: et vocabitur Admirabilis, Deus, Princeps pacis, Pater futuri saeculi: cujus regni non erit finis.[220] — Dominus regnavit, decorem indutus est: indutus est Dominus fortitudinem, et praecinxit se.[221]
>
> TRANS.: A light shall shine upon us this day: for the Lord is born to us: and He shall be called Wonderful, God, the Prince of Peace, the Father of the world to come: of whose reign there shall be no end. The Lord hath reigned, He is clothed with beauty: the Lord is clothed with strength, and hath girded Himself.

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[219] At the Communion, the idea of light associated again with the holiness of the Birth is expressed: "In the brightness of the Saints, from the womb before the day star I begot thee" (Taken from Psalm 109:3).

[220] Isaiah 9:2-6.

[221] Psalm 92:1.

The Gradual (Psalm 117: 23, 26-7) carries on with the light imagery which surrounds the miraculous event, this time in direct connection with the delivery: "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini: Deus Dominus, et illuxit nobis. V.: A Domino factum est istud: et est mirabile in oculis nostris; *Missale Romanum* 23" (Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord: the Lord is God, and He hath shone upon us. V.: This is the Lord's doing: and it is wonderful in our eyes). The Gospel set aside for the day is Luke 2:15-20, and deals with the rest of the account of the Annunciation to the Shepherds (i.e., how the shepherds decide to set forth to Bethlehem and worship the Baby, and become the spokesmen of His message).

The third Mass ("Ad Tertiam Missam in die Nativitatis Domini," or "Missam 'Puer Natus Est'"[222]) starts with the proclamation of the Birth and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. The Lesson is from the Letter of St Paul to the Hebrews (1:1-12) and corroborates that Jesus is the Messiah announced and defines Him as "splendor gloriae; *Missale Romanum* 25" (the brightness of God's glory). The Gospel reading is John (1:1-14) and it describes the mystery of the identity of Jesus, that is, it develops a Christology or an explanation of Christ's nature and origin. Jesus is the word, who is the instrument of total victory of light over darkness, its binary opposite. The Gospel then narrates how John the Baptist, as a witness of divine light, became a spokesmen of the message, which is the role assigned to the shepherds in Luke's Gospel and in the dramas:

[222] After the Introit: Puer natus est nobis, et Filius datus est nobis (Isaiah 9: 9-6).

> In principio erat Verbum et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Hoc erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia per ipsum facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil quod factum est; in ipso vita erat, et vita erat lux hominum; et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebræ eam comprehenderunt. (*Missale Romanum* 26).
>
> TRANS.: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was in God's presence, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made: in Him was life, and the life was the Light of men; and the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Thus, light and darkness, both literally and metaphorically read, is central to all representations and celebrations of the Nativity event. The liturgy clearly revolves upon this dichotomy and the playwrights adapted this imagery to the play texts. This language combined with the star seem to conform the materiality of the Nativity narrative both in liturgy and in the dramas. As Twycross states in an article examining why the Virgin's face was said to shine, "the vocabulary of divine revelation uses the term "illumination" which is again a given expression in stories where divine beings appear to humans, and those in which humans become quasi-divine" ("As the Sun with his Beams" 42).

Chapter 6
The Biblical Awakening

6.1 Prophets, Typology and Jesus's Lineage

The shepherds' religious awakening after the announcement of Jesus's Birth includes in several pieces the recitation of typological and prophetical accounts which had foretold the coming of the Messiah. Prophecies about the coming of Christ are not limited to the Old Testament prophets, since they also include New Testament references such as those of Elizabeth or John the Baptist, or even allusions by characters who belong to the gentile world, namely, Virgil's alleged prophecy as foretold by the Sibyl. In addition, a series of somewhat elaborated references to Jesus's ancestry which proclaim his royal descent are found in both the English and the Castilian traditions. Such learned attitude on the part of the shepherds, which implies a command of the Scripture, contrasts sharply with their previous dim-witted behavior and their interest in earthly irrelevant matters.

The Towneley First Shepherds' Play displays the most comprehensive list of messianic prophecies among the English dramas. It is worth noting that the codex includes an incomplete *Play of the Prophets* (*Play 7*) known as a *Processsus Prophetarum*. It appears to be out of place in the manuscript, as it should follow and not precede *The Pharao Play* (*Play 8*), as it is the case in other cycles. This play only includes the prophecies of

Moses, David, the Sibyl and Daniel. It cannot be ascertained how many more prophets were mentioned in the original text (Stevens and Cawley vol. 2: 459-64).

The fact that prophecies are also found in other pageants within the same codex has traditionally been viewed as an underlying "prophetic principle" or a cohesive device that governs the entire cycle (Withington 573). In this sense, Manly sustains that the prophetic language would help control the play and, at the same time, it prevents the audience from going astray from the final message of redemption (151-55). However, historians such as Dunn question whether a motif repeated in plays of different chronological periods by different hands can be regarded as a genuine pattern (90).[223] The modern editors of *The Towneley Plays*, Stevens and Cawley, note that the scriptural knowledge displayed by the shepherds may simply belong to the medieval tradition of scriptural exegesis in which the shepherds of Luke's Gospel stood for the clergy given that are able to read and interpret the meaning underlying the Scripture (vol. 2: 490; notes to ll. 478 and ff).

The First Shepherds' Play includes thirteen prophetic accounts (ll. 478-501) of Jesus's Birth, twelve of which appear in the Pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo Contra Iudaeos, Paganos et Arianos* which, as described above, was erroneously attributed to St Augustin (hence the Pseudo-Augustinian label) through the Middle Ages and served as the basis for a Matins *Lectio*

[223] On the prophetic principle see also Walter E. Greg. *Bibliographical and Textual Problems of the English Miracle Cycles*. London: Alexander Moring Limited, 1914. 71.

at Christmas. Its use as the sixth *Lectio* of Matins is recorded in a 12th century lectionary from Arles which bears the title "Sermo Beati Agustini Episcopi de Natale Domini. Lectio Sexta" (Young vol. 2: 126). The liturgical text was adopted by other French and European cathedrals such as Laon, Rouen, Limoges or Salermo.[224] Historians claim that it was cast into this quasi-dramatic form towards the end of the 11th century, and the oldest surviving version seems to be the one pertaining to the Monastery of St Martial at Limoges (Dunn 81).[225] This trope is traditionally known as *Ordo Prophetarum* or *The Procession of the Prophets*. Young actually describes the extant texts as "a small body of pieces, presented on Christmas Day or a week later, containing utterances of the prophets concerning the coming of Christ" (vol. 2: 125).

The *Ordo Prophetarum* was probably sung antiphonally by the members of the choir. Thus, as the Old Testament prophets were summoned, they pronounced their testimony.[226] In the Pseudo-Augustinian sermon, the list of prophets appears as follows: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Moses, David, Habakkuk, Simeon, Zacharias, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Virgil, Nebuchadnezzar, and the Erythraean Sibyl. In the shepherds' dramas, the

[224] The Salermo opening rubrics read: "In Nativitate Nocte post primam misam legitur Sermo Sancti Augustini Episcopi, more Salernitano." See Young 2: 133 and 126-38.

[225] A version from the Cathedral of Limoges has been analyzed by Edward Noble Stone. *A Translation of Chapters XI-XVI of the Pseudo-Augustinian Sermon Against Jews, Pagans, and Arians, Concerning the Creed; Also de Ordo Prophetarum of St. Martial of Limoges*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1928. 195-214.

[226] On the history and development of the music of the *Ordo Prophetarum* see Robert C. Lagueux. "Sermons, Exegesis, and Performance: The Laon Ordo Prophetarum and the Meaning of Advent." *Comparative Drama* 43.2. (2009): 197-220. On the evolution of the trope in Spain, see María del Carmen Gómez Muntané. *La Música Medieval en España*. Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2001. 61-111.

prophets do not feature as characters[227] but, rather, the shepherds themselves recite or paraphrase the prophetical accounts. That is, the rustic shepherds themselves are eventually assigned a didactic and exegetical function, as they offer their explanation and critical interpretation of the revealed truth.

In *The Towneley First Shepherds' Play*, the prophets are mentioned in the following order: Isaiah, David, the Sibyl, Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah, Moses, Habakkuk, Elijah, Elizabeth, Zacharias, David, John the Baptist, Daniel, and Virgil.[228] It is interesting to note that in this list "Ely" (l. 43), i.e., Elijah, replaces Simeon in the aforementioned Christmas *Lectio*. In addition, the fact that the shepherds actually attempt to recite Virgil may have a double reading. First, the classical poet is mentioned as a "prophet" for, according to a Church tradition which the *Ordo Prophetarum* recalls, the Roman poet foretold the Birth of Christ in his fourth eclogue (Metford 256). The reference to Virgil could also be presented as an acknowledgment of the shepherds' new status as enlightened men, as they are now able to quote or paraphrase not only the prophets, but also the classics. Thus, the First Shepherd says:

> Virgill in his poetré
> Sayde in his verse. . . :
> Iam noua progenies celo demittitur alto;
> Iam rediet Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna (ll. 556-59).

[227] The only exception is *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* in which two prophets intervene after the shepherds worship the child. This case is addressed below.

[228] "Isae" (l. 484) or "Isay" (l. 491), "Dauid" (l. 488), "Sybiyll" (l. 505), "Nabugodhonosor" (l.506), "Ieromy" (l. 517), "Moyses" (l. 518), "Abacuc" (l. 543), "Ely" (l. 43), "Elezabeth" (l. 545), "Zacharé" (l. 545), "Dauid" (l. 547), "Iohn the Baptyste" (l. 549), "Daniel" (l. 550), "Virgill" (l. 556).

The first line in Latin, "Now a new progeny is sent down from heaven high," derives from the *Sermo contra Iudaeos* (see Young vol. 2: 129). The second one, however, "now a virgin comes again, the reign of Saturn returns," does not belong to a liturgical trope, but it might be the playwright's own invention, as Stevens and Cawley suggest (vol. 2: 491-92). As Woolf points out, realistically, the shepherds are incongruously learned, although it is likely that Virgil's eclogues were known throughout the Middle Ages and, therefore, they "provided for the poet at least a literary context in which the shepherd as man of knowledge would not seem out of place" (*The English Mystery Plays* 183).[229]

The First Shepherds' Play also includes references to the Root of Jesse (ll. 493-503), that is, the whole account of Christ's genealogy, usually depicted in medieval art as a tree[230] which grows and rises from Jesse of Bethlehem, King David's father:[231]

> Also Isay says—
> Oure faders vs told—
> That a vyrgyn shuld pas
> Of Iesse, that wold
> Bryng furth, by grace,
> A floure so bold.
> That vyrgyn now has

[229] For the medieval knowledge of the classic eclogues refer to Francis Wormal. *The English Library Before 1700: Studies in its History*. London: Athlone Press, 1958. 97. See also Ella Bourne. "The Messianic Message in Vergil's Fourth Eclogue." *The Classical Journal* 11. 7 (1916): 390-400.

[230] The earliest extant representation of the Jesse Tree is in the Vysehrad Codex (1086) also known as the Coronation Gospels of Vratislav II of Bohemia. See Jean Anne Hayes Williams. "The Earliest Dated Tree of Jesse Image: Thematically Reconsidered." *Athanor* 18 (2000): 17-23.

[231] On the medieval vision of the Root of Jesse in relation to Marian accounts, see Beryl Smalley. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*. Oxford: OUP, 1947. 189.

these wordys vphold,
As ye se.
Trust it now we may,
He is borne this day,
Exiet virga
De radice Iesse (ll. 491-503).

The shepherd even mentions the source, Isaiah. It should be noted that Isaiah 11: 1-5 was set aside for the *Lectio* during the Ember Friday Mass: "Haec dixit Dominus Deus: Egredietur virga de radice Iesse, et flos de radice eius ascendet" (Thus saith the Lord God: There shall come forth a rod out of the Root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root). The text just prefigures the coming of a savior springing from the Jesse tree, although the particular names of the lineage mentioned by the shepherds in *Towneley* are drawn from Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38.[232] It should be noted that *The N-Town Play* is unique among the extant English biblical dramas for it contains a pageant devoted to the Root of Jesse (*Play 7*); it is placed right after *The Moses Play* (*Play 6*) and *The Joachim and Anna Play* (*Play 8*). This piece actually merges the traditions of the *Prophetae* with the iconographic *Radix Jesse*.

Conversely, the prophetic discussion found in *The Second Shepherds' Play* is considerably shorter (ll. 972-84, 998-1010). In this respect, when analyzing the prophetic material in this work, Manly concludes that the playwright's technique, as opposed to the one used in *The First Shepherds' Play*, is "impressionistic" for he uses what he calls "prophetic suggestion" instead of full detailed accounts (155). It is worth noting that only the old-

[232] An intermediate source for the *First Shepherds' Play* might have been a *Prophetae* play similar to the aforementioned French versions. See Stevens and Cawley vol. 2: 490-91.

est shepherds are given prophetic lines in this play as if they were teaching the youngest one. In this sense, Stevens and Cawley suggest that the Third Shepherd, who is the youngest, is not assigned any learned lines on prophets and patriarchs in order to ease the transition from the comic episode involving Mak into the more solemn adoration scene (vol. 2: 511). Thus, only David and Isaiah are explicitly mentioned by the Second Shepherd:

> We fynde by the prophecy—
> Let be youre dyn!—
> Of Dauid and Isay:
> And mo then I myn—
> Thay prophecyed by clergy—
> That in a vyrgyn
> Shuld he lyght and ly,
> To slokyn oure syn
> And slake it,
> Oure kynde from wo;
> For Isay sayd so:
> *Ecce Virgo*
> *Concipiet* a chylde that is nakyd (ll. 972-84).

The source for the last lines is Isaiah 7:14,"Ecce virgo concipiet, et pariet filium" (Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son). Even if the list of prophets is here reduced to two names, the playwright seems to quote Isaiah's prophecy, given its importance as well as its liturgical weight: Isaiah conventionally leads the procession in the *Processus Prophetarum*. Also, this prophecy is the first one mentioned in the *Sermo Contra Iudaeos*, for Isaiah is regarded as the main prophet in the Christian tradition (Young vol. 2: 126-38). Moreover, as in the *First Shepherds' Play*, the reference to this particular biblical passage sets the play liturgically in the Advent

time, for Isaiah 7:10-15 was selected for the Lesson on Ember Wednesday (*Missale Romanum* 8).

The N-Town shepherds' piece opens immediately with the angel's announcement and continues with the characters interpreting the celestial revelation in the light of prophetical and typological accounts. Then, the *Gloria* is sung by the celestial messengers. The only prophets mentioned in the text are Balaam (l. 26, and then again in l. 38), Moses, Jacob, and David (ll. 22-61). Woolf, who describes the *N-Town* pageant as "the most severe and reserved" among the English shepherds' plays, states that the playwright "is evidently influenced by allegorical expositions in which the shepherds (*pastores*) mystically signified the clergy who also watch over their flocks and can penetrate a spiritual meaning beneath the letter of the text" (*The English Mystery Plays* 183).[233] In this sense, the *N-Town* shepherds are already enlightened when the play opens, and the comprehension of the divine message is not deferred as it is the case in the *Towneley* and *Chester* pageants. The gift-giving is different from other dramas as well, since the shepherds offer just their songs and their love to the child instead of material goods (ll. 119-26 and 151-54). This fact contributes to strengthen the shepherds' humble nature and would be therefore consis-

[233] Woolf mistakenly states that this play opens with the angels singing the *Gloria*. However, no singing is implied at the beginning, but only a recitation announcing the Birth: "Joye to God þat sytt in hevyn | And pes to man on erthe grownde. | A chylde is born benethe þe levyn" (ll. 1-4). The singing of the *Gloria* is deferred until the shepherds articulate the prophecies when a stage direction reads "Gloria in Excelsis Deo cantent" (stage direction at l. 61).

tent with the aforementioned "severe" and "reserved" tone of the entire play described by Woolf.

The prophecies in *N-Town* help explain the nature of the divine signs that surround the miraculous birth. That is the case of the extraordinary light associated with the angel, which Primus Pastor describes as "bryghtere þan þe sunnebem" (l. 18) and Secundus Pastor interprets it in terms of Balaam's prophecy:

> Balaam spak in prophesye
> A lyght xuld shyne vpon þe skye
> Whan a sone of a mayd Marye
> In Bedleem were iborn (ll. 26-29).

Eventually, Primus Pastor manages to understand the nature of the light and also paraphrases Balaam's prophetical account: "Balaam spak in prophecie |Out of Jacob xuld shyne a skye" (ll. 38-39). Similarly, Tertius Pastor also interprets the light as a symbol of the messianic arrival but resorts to Daniel for his elucidation:

> Danyel þe prophete þus gan speke:
> "Wyse God, from woo us wreke,
> þi bryght hevyn þu to-breke
> And medele þe with a mayde" (ll. 54-57).

The last line may derive from Daniel 7:13–14, even if no specific reference to meddling "with a mayde" is given in the biblical account, which only recounts that the vision took place at night:

> Aspiciebam ergo in visione noctis et ecce cum nubibus caeli quasi filius hominis veniebat et usque ad antiquum dierum pervenit et in conspectu eius obtulerunt eum et dedit ei potestatem et honorem et regnum et omnes populi tribus ac linguae ipsi servient potestas

> eius potestas aeterna quae non auferetur et regnum eius quod non corrumpetur.
>
> TRANS.: I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

However, references to Mary's virginity are found earlier in the play when Moses's prophetical explanation is given, to which the Third Shepherd adds the conviction that the child announced by the angel is indeed Christ, who through His passion and death will redeem humanity

> Thow I make lyty[l] noyse
> I am an herde þat hattyht Moyse.
> I herde carpynge of a croyse
> Of Moyses in his lawe.
> Of a mayd a barne born,
> On a tre he xulde be torn;
> Delyver folkys þat arn forlorn,
> The chylde xulde be slawe (ll. 30-37).

The play departs from this solemn style only when the shepherds, as it happens in the rest of plays, try to interpret and paraphrase the Latin *Gloria* (ll. 62-73). The playwright might have included this comic gag for the sake of convention, as it appears in most shepherds' dramas. However, the solemn tone of the play is immediately resumed as the characters resort to prophetical accounts showing again a substancial theological mastery:

> The prophecye of Boosdras is spedly sped.
> Now leyke we hens as that lyght us lede.

> Myght we se onys that bryght on bed—
> Our bale it wolde unbynde—
> We shulde shodyr for no shoure.
> Buske we us hens to Bedleem boure
> To se that fayr fresch flowre,
> The mayde mylde in mynde (ll. 74-81).[234]

After this point, the *N-Town* shepherds set off for the stable to worship the baby, thus offering their songs and their love for, as stated above, it is all they have: "Lete us go forthe fast on hye, | And honowre þat babe wurthylye, | With merthe, songe, and melodye (ll. 86-88). The characters sing along on their way to the stable in Bethlehem, although, as opposed to other plays in which they perform folk songs in the vernacular, here the Latin Marian Hymn "Stella Caeli" is chosen.[235]

The York Chandlers' Play is similar in tone to *The N-Town Play* and so it opens in a rather formal manner, although the prophecies in the former are placed before the angel's revelation. The first shepherd is acquainted with the prediction of Patriarchs and Prophets about a prince who will be born in Bethlehem:

> Bredir, in haste takis heede and here
> What I wille speke and specifie;
> Sen we walke þus, withouten were,
> What mengis my moode nowe meve yt will I.
> Oure forme-fadres faythfull in fere,
> Bothe Osye and Isaye,
> Preued þat a prins withouten pere[236]
> Shulde descende doune in a lady,

[234] See Isaiah 63:1: "Who is this that comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosra, this beautiful one in his robe." The passage also compares the red garments to the ones worn by those who tread at the wine press (Isaiah 63:2).

[235] The hymn and the music in the play are discussed in more detail below in Chapter 7.

[236] Compare l. 73 in *N-Town*: "Ther is a chylde born shal be a prynce myghty!"

> And to make mankynde clerly,
> To leche þam þat are lorne.
> And in Bedlem hereby
> Sall þat same barne by borne (ll. 1-12).

Likewise, the other two shepherds also prove themselves to be well-informed. The fact that these shepherds stand for the clergy is perhaps clearer in this play. In this sense, Davidson, for instance, states that these herdsmen do not stand for "ordinary shepherds" but rather that they possess a more "symbolic sense also representative of spiritual shepherds, the clergy, who are leaders in maintaining the adoration of the Child in the liturgy" (*The York Corpus Christi Plays* notes to ll. 5-12).

The prophetic list in *York* is reduced to three names: Hosea and Isaiah, who are cited in the same line (Osye and Isaye, l. 6), and Balaham (l. 14). The prophecies refer both to Jesus as the true prince born from a virgin as seen above in ll. 7-9, and to the symbols (ll. 15-16): "A sterne shulde schyne and signifie | With lightfull lemes like any day." However, even if the characters display this learned attitude, there seems to be a moment when the seriousness and tension is relaxed, although it is not as comic as in other dramas. This moment is achieved when the shepherds are bewildered by a series of extraordinary circumstances and they react by employing idiomatic shouts, although the customary burlesque imitations of the angel's Latin does not feature in the text. With regard to the imitation of the missing *Gloria*, Woolf suggests that "there is a hint of this theme when the first shepherd boasts that he could sing as well as the angel" (*The English Mystery Plays* 183) when he says "I can synge itt alls wele as hee" (l.

60). However, it is difficult to ascertain whether the original tone of the play was actually like this since there is a missing leaf in the manuscript which in all likelihood included the coming of the angel and his song. This is in fact the case in *The Shrewsbury Officium Pastorum*, which the *York* pageant resembles.[237]

The manner in which *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* deals with the prophecies differs from the rest of English shepherds' plays in several ways. To begin with, there seems to be certain inconsistencies, at least if the text is approached from a liturgical viewpoint. The shepherds' dialogue contains the common references to their hardships and complaints on bad weather (ll. 89-229). Once the three shepherds reunite, a stage direction at l. 228 indicates that the shepherds eat and drink as they spot the star: "There the scheppardis drawys furth there meyte and doth eyte and drynk; and asse they drynk the fynd the star and say thus." Pastor III immediately wonders "What thyng ys yondur thatt schynith soo bryght" (l. 230) and states that he had never seen "soche a syght in fyld" (l. 232). However, in the following line he suddenly comprehends the nature of the event:

> A, ha, now ys cum the tyme þat old fathurs hath told
> Thatt in the wynturs nyght soo cold
> A chyld of meydynn borne be wold
> In whom all profeciys schal be fullfyld (ll. 233-36).

The First Shepherd agrees with his mate's assertion and supports his view by mentioning Isaiah's prophecy that the Savior would be born of a maid:

[237] In *The Shrewsbury Fragments*, the Third Shepherd comments on the "nobull noyes" made by "an angel bright" (ll. 16–17).

> Soo seyd the profett Isaye,
> Thatt a chylde schuld be borne of a made soo bryght
> In wentur ny the shortist dey
> Or elis in the myddis of the nyght (ll. 237-41).

The Second Shepherd in his turn praises God, since they were granted "to see that syght" (l. 243) and the "knoleyge of this syngnefocacion" (l. 246). The prophecy the shepherd alludes to in l. 238 is actually Isaiah 7:14 which, as mentioned above, was read on Ember Wednesday, one of the days on the calendar which marks strict fasting. Yet, the shepherds experiment this state of grace and knowledge even if they do so by means of feasting, not fasting. In other words, unlike the other plays in which the shepherds are not ready to understand the revealed signs and messages until they give up eating and drinking, the food topic is used here to indicate that the period of fasting is over and that is why they are able to understand and interpret the signs in the light of prophetic accounts.

When analyzing the shepherds' repast in this play, King and Davidson claim that what is "suggested here is breaking of pre-Christmas fast" although they add that this "pre-Christmas fast was obligatory in England from the first Sunday in Advent until midnight on Christmas Eve" (225-26 note to stage direction at l. 229). This would be incongruous in liturgical terms in view of the texts paraphrased by the characters. As a matter of fact, when Pastor I invokes Isaiah's prophecy, he claims that the Birth ought to be on the "schortist dey" of the year or in the middle of the night. In the early 16th century the shortest day according to the Julian calendar was closer to the feast of St Lucy (December 13) than to Christ-

mas[238] and, therefore, during the strict period of fast. It may be possible, however, that the food topic was an addition and that it might have been included in imitation of other more elaborated English plays (*Towneley* and *Chester*) without actually paying attention to liturgical accuracy.

The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors also contains the shepherds' imitation of the *Gloria* (ll. 254-63) even if, as will be seen below, it is not as elaborated as in other plays. However, the shepherds do not actually sing the hymn, in spite of attempting to reproduce the words. As a matter of fact, when the First Shepherd suggests that they may "[...] syng in his presence | "Et in tarra pax omynibus" (l. 262-63), a stage direction at l. 263 indicates that they actually sing along a song in the vernacular as they set off for the Manger: "There the scheppardis syngis "Ase I Owt Rodde."

After their song, the shepherds start their trip. However, even though they do not know the exact details of their destination, they walk just to do what has been required of them by the heavenly messenger. Interestingly, two angels intervene again and deliver their message. Angel I, following Luke 2:12, tells the herdsmen not to be afraid, explains the significance of the star, and finally discloses that the baby has been born in Bethlehem. Then, Angel II adds some information, highlighting the baby's humble nature and stressing the newborn's royal descent:

> ANGELL I
> Hyrd men hynd, drede ye nothing
> Off thys star thatt ye do se,
> For thy same morne Godis sun ys borne

[238] See King and Davidson 226-27 note to ll. 238-41.

In Bedlem of a meydin fre.

ANGELL II
Hy you thyddur in hast.
Yt ys hys wyll ye schall hym see
Lynge in a crybbe of pore reypaste,
Yett of Davithis lyne cumonn ys hee (ll. 283-90).

The final reference to "Davithis lyne" derives from Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38, which relate Jesus to the Root of Jesse. However, in the biblical account, David appears as Joseph's ancestor not as Mary's relative. The matter of Mary's lineage is clarified later in the play, as Prophet I claims that when she married Joseph, David (and Salomon) became Mary's ancestors as well (see l. 357-60).

The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors actually includes a dialogue between two prophets (ll. 313-424) after the baby has been born. According to a stage direction at l. 312, the shepherds go offstage and two prophets come in: "There the scheppardis syngith ageyne and goth for the of the place; and the ij profettis cymyth in [...]." However, there is no reference to the Holy Family, so it may be assumed that they remain on stage, visible to the audience.[239] The prophets clearly indicate that they had heard the shepherds' joy, their description of the star and their praise of the King of Israel (ll. 385-95). Their doctrinal verses include messianic accounts (ll. 380 and ff),[240] and certain theological aspects concerning

[239] King and Davidson suggest that the exit of the herdsmen and the entrance of the "ij profettis" could be interpreted as the point where two earlier plays were merged, either by Croo or by another hand (230-31 note to ll. 313-424).

[240] King suggests that both prophets probably held books of Scripture, and that the second one acts as a foil to the first one. Pamela King. "Faith, Reason and Prophets' Dialogues in the *Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*." Ed. James Redmond. *Drama and Philosophy*. Cambridge: CUP, 1990. 37-46.

Mary's virginity (l. 332), the Trinity (ll. 334-37), Mary and Joseph's marriage (ll. 359-67), and Christ's Passion, including the necessity to shed his blood to save humanity (ll. 375-76). It closes with a reference to Isaiah 1:3 which is taken traditionally as the prophetic account that Christ was to be born between an ox and an ass in a crib.[241]

The Root of Jesse is also alluded to in their doctrinal discussion. Given that the baby is described as a prince (l. 356), Prophet II inquires about Mary's "nobull and hy lenage" (l. 355). Prophet I assures that she has noble ancestry and mentions David, as the angel had done before referring to Jesus's genealogy in l. 290. He also adds Solomon, as he belongs to the same family line.[242] At this point, the prophet clarifies the angels' words (ll. 280-90) as he explains that Mary's descent—and consequently her son's—is not by blood, but by marriage:

> Ondowtid sche ys cum of hy parrage,
> Of the howse of Davith , and Salamon the sage,
> And won off the same lyne joynid to hir be mareage,
> Of whose trybe we do subscryve this chy<l>dis lenage (ll. 357-60).

The prophets also deal with Mary's conception out of wedlock, which was regarded as anti-natural (l. 368). Prophet I fails to understand what seems to him like a logical impossibility for, in his opinion, the King of Nature cannot go against nature. Prophet II answers that "the Kyng of nature may hawe all at his one wyll" (l. 369), and exemplifies this fact by referring to

[241] "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel hath known me, and my people hath not understood" (Isaiah 1:3). Actually the story of the two animals seems to derive as well from Habacuc 3:2, and Exodus: 25: 18-20. On the origin of the ox and the ass in the Christian tradition, see Joseph Ratzinger. *La Infancia de Jesús*. Barcelona: Planeta, 2012. 76-77.

[242] See Luke 3:23-38 and Matthew 1: 1-16.

the Old Testament story of Aaron's rod, which is not mentioned in the rest English plays:[243]

> PROFETA IJ
> Yett can I nott aspy, be no wysse.
> How thys chylde borne schuld be withowt naturis prejudyse.
>
> PROFETA J
> Nay no prejudyse vnto nature I dare well sey.
> For the Kyng of nature may hawe all at his one wyll.
> Dyd not þe powar of God make Aronis rod beyre frute in on day?
>
> PROFETA IJ
> Truth yt ys inded (ll. 366-71).

The source of their discussion is Numbers 17. In this passage, God orders that each of the Twelve Tribes of Israel provide a rod, but only that of the tribe elected to become priests would miraculously bud overnight. Only Aaron's rod, who represented the tribe of Levi "[. . .] broght forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" (Numbers 17:16-20).[244]

The story of Aaron's rod also features in López de Yanguas's *Égloga de la Natividad*, although the miraculous account is different and, in this case, the source is Exodus 7:

> Venido es aquel que la verga de Arón
> hizo que fuesse tornada serpiente,
> la cual se tragó, si quies que lo cuente,
> las otras culebras delante Faraón (ll. 121-24).
>
> TRANS.:
> The descendant from Aaron's Rod has arrived;
> He made that it [the rod] was turned into a serpent,

[243] Aaron was Moses' brother. Aaron's rod was endowed with miraculous power. Both Moses' and Aaron's rods proved to act wonders during the Plagues of Egypt that preceded the Exodus (Exodus 7:17, 8:5, 8:16-17, 9:23, and 10:13).

[244] The Latin text reads: "[. . .] gemmis eruperant flores qui foliis dilatatis in amigdalas deformati sunt."

Which swallowed, if you wish me to tell the story,
The rest of snakes in front of Pharaoh.

Mingo assures that the boy that has been born is the same God that spoke to Aaron, whose rod in this biblical account showed a miraculous power on its own, i.e., when not being held physically by its owner. God sends Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh once more, and tells Aaron that when Pharaoh asks him to see a miracle, he is to cast down his rod and it will be turned into a serpent. At that point, Pharaoh's sorcerers would also cast down their rods, which would also became snakes. In the end, Aaron's rod/serpent swallows the rest. Pharaoh ignores this warning, a fact that gives rise to the Plagues of Egypt. Remarkably, Exodus 7 begins with God's words, "See, I have made thee [Moses] a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet" (Exodus 7:1). Thus, like God, who conveys his word to his people through his prophets, Moses transmits God's message through Aaron to Pharaoh. Therefore, it could be argued that this is also the role assigned to the shepherds in the plays: the prophets'/shepherds' task is to speak God's word, or to function, as Moses and his brother did, as God's "mouth" (Exodus 4:15-16).

López de Yanguas's *Égloga de la Natividad* also lays significant emphasis on prophecy and typology. The play opens with the news of the Birth and so there is no room for a transformation of the characters into more learned types. Nevertheless, as explained above, they do retain many of the characteristics of the rustic shepherds, namely their *Sayagués* speech.

A first reference to the prophets is given when one of the shepherds, Gil, discusses Mary's virginity:

> Sabes tan bien del chiquillo
> que dizen que virgin y madre lo cría:
> essa es la cuenta. ¡Pardiós, da acá vía!
> Y demos con grita y placer una dança! (ll. 43-6).
>
> TRANS.:
> I bet you know about the kid so well
> That it is said that a virgin and mother will raise him:
> That's the story. For God's sake, come over here!
> And let's scream and show our joy while we dance!

Gil does not mention the source of this prophecy (Isaiah), which is only disclosed when the shepherds acknowledge that the child is in fact the son of a king and that he is himself a king; Benito picks up on Mary's virginity and discloses the source:

> PERO
> Yo digo que es hijo de rey y que es rey,
> según que lo cuentan sus profecías:
> el mesmo sagrado, bendito Messías
> que está prometido venir en la ley.
>
> BENITO
> Aunque no quieras, Pidruelo, crey
> que deste mochacho nos dijo Isaía
> que virgen su madre lo concebiría,
> que salvos hiziesse los hatos y grey (ll. 105-12).
>
> TRANS.:
> PERO
> I say that he is the son of a king and that He is a king,
> As his prophecies recount:
> The same holy and sacred Messiah
> That was promised to come in the law.
>
> BENITO
> You may not believe me, Pidruelo, but I thought
> That Isaiah had said about this child

That his virgin mother would conceive him
And would save the flocks and the faithful.

Later on, apart from the reference to Aaron's rod discussed above, the story of Nebuchadnezzar and the fiery furnace is told (ll. 125-28). This story, taken from Daniel 3:47-56, was actually read during the Mass on Ember Saturday (or "Missa Veni et Ostende[245]"). Daniel 3:47-51 was set aside for the *Lectio* and Daniel 3:52-56 for the following hymn (*Missale Romanum* 12).

López de Yangua's play contains further prophetic accounts to proclaim that through the Birth of Jesus, the Devil has been defeated. A stage direction at l. 128 before Gil's speech reads: "Gil Pata contra el diablo" (Gil Pata against the devil). As a matter of fact, Gil, addressing the Devil with the classic denomination of Pluto, warns him of Jesus's arrival:

Los sanctos profetas allá donde están
llamando al divino Messías prometido,
tú lleva la nueva, Plutón, que es venido.
¡Bué, cessen sus penas, dolores y afán,
y sepan de cierto que ya gozarán
del campo florido que llaman Eliso!
El cual este niño para ellos lo quiso;
que presto sus ojos ansí lo verán (ll. 129-36).

TRANS.:
The Holy Prophets over there, from where they are,
As they call the promised divine Messiah
Urge you, Pluto, to tell the news that he has arrived.
Yay! May your sorrows, pains and hardships cease!
And let everyone know that they will already enjoy
The flowery field known as Elysium

[245] Named after the Introit (taken from Psalm 79:4,2) which starts: "Veni, et ostende nobis faciem tuam, Domine, qui sedes super Cherubim."

> Which this child desired for them;
> And that their eyes will soon see.

Pero's speech follows (ll. 137-44) and it is also said to be "contra el diablo; stage direction at l. 136" (against the Devil) and, addressing Satan as well, he proclaims the triumph of life over death. Then, Mingo resorts once again to the Old Testament, claiming that this child is the same God that saved Daniel from the lions (Daniel 6), and the people of Israel from the Egyptians. In turn, Benito shows his conviction that this must be the same God who had freed the Israelites (ll. 153-60), and provides a catalogue of the plagues, as a stage direction at l. 161 clarifies: "Prosigue las plagas de Egito" (the plagues of Egypt follow):

> Estando su pueblo captivo, sugeto
> al duro Faraón, passando tormentas,
> volvió este moçuelo las aguas sangrientas,
> que no quedó pece, ni branco ni prieto.
> Allí dio las plagas, terribles de aspecto:
> granizos, langostas, mosquitos y ranas,
> tinieblas palpables y muertes insanas (ll. 161-67).
>
> TRANS.:
> While his people were being held captive
> In the hands of the tough Pharao
> Stricken by storms
> This child turned the waters into blood
> And not a single fish lived, neither white nor black.
> There he gave the plagues, of terrible aspect: hale, locust
> Mosquitoes and frogs,
> Tangible darkness and unhealthy deaths.

The order in which the shepherd lists the plagues differs from that found in the Bible. He first mentions "tormentas" (storms), although the ones mentioned in Exodus 9:13–35 (seventh plague) are specifically "storms of

fire;" then "aguas sangrientas" is actually the first biblical plague, "water into blood" (Exodus 7:14-25). In l. 166 he mentions "langostas," i.e., locusts, which correspond to Exodus 10:1-20 (the eighth biblical plague); the text refers to "mosquitos," (mosquitoes), although Exodus 8:20-32 (the forth plague) mentions "swarms of flies." The reference to "ranas" (frogs) corresponds to the second biblical plague (Exodus 7:25–8:11). In l. 167, "tinieblas palpables" (tangible darkness) corresponds to the ninth plague (Exodus 10:21–29), and then the shepherd mentions "muertes insanas" (unhealthy deaths), although Exodus 11:1 and 12:36 (tenth plague) clearly refers to the death of the firstborn in every household.

God's wrath against the Egyptians is recalled in the readings of the Divine Office during Advent. For instance, the second Lesson at Matins for the Thursday of the second Week of Advent is Isaiah 19:3, which actually deals with this topic: "Et disrumpetur spiritus Aegypti in visceribus eius et consilium eius praecipitabo et interrogabunt simulacra sua et divinos suos et pythones et ariolos; *Breviarium Romanum* 149" (And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof, and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to their idols, and to their charmers).

In Juan del Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, the characters actually try to identify themselves with the biblical Egyptians and they believe that the current floods caused by the heavy rains must be, in fact, some sort of divine punishment: "Ogaño Dios a destajo | tiene tomado el llover; ll. 51-52)" (This year, God, restlessly | Has determined it to rain). The identification with the Egyptians is explicitly indicated by Juan:

> [...] con los andiluvios grandes
> ni quedan vados ni puentes,
> y a las gentes
> reclaman a boz en grito;
> andan como los de Egipto (ll. 67-71).
>
> TRANS.:
> [...] due to the great storms
> No fords or bridges remain
> And people are
> Crying out;
> They feel like the Egyptians.

They actually suffer the fifth biblical plague, which caused the death of livestock (Exodus 9:1–3), as Antón's words reflect when, in anguish, he speaks of their "ganados perecidos; l. 74" (deceased flocks). Not only are sheep dying, but also people: the death of a local sacristan has been reported, a situation which makes them feel even more grief (l. 96). Gómez Manrique's mentions the Egyptians as well. In his work, Jesus is anachronistically regarded as the relief for the captive Israelites:

> Este [niño] fue reparo,
> aunqu'el costo caro,
> d'aquel pueblo amaro
> cativo en Egito" (ll. 171-4).
>
> TRANS.:
> This [boy] was the remedy,
> Even if the price paid was high
> By those afflicted people
> Kept captive in Egypt.

López de Yanguas *Égloga de la Natividad* stands out among the Spanish and English dramas, as it includes the most comprehensive genealogy of Jesus (ll. 200-55), which is explicitly introduced through a stage direction at l. 199: "Liber generationis incipitur" (The book of the genealogy

begins). Mingo provides a catalogue of ancestors based on the aforementioned genealogies offered by Matthew and Luke. Mary is mentioned, ascribing her to the same lineage, after marrying Joseph:

> Aqueste Mathán, yo os juro a mi vida,
> según l'avangelio de vero contó,
> que fue dicho padre del santo Jacó,
> el cual fue suegro de aquesta parida.
> He aquí la cuenta ya casi cumplida;
> mas, porque ninguna cosilla discrepe:
> su esposo de aquésta se llama Josepe (ll. 248-54).
>
> TRANS.:
> This Matthat, I swear on my life,
> According to the true account in the Gospel,
> Was the father of Jacob,
> Who was the father-in-law of the [woman] who just gave birth;
> I'm almost done with the account,
> Although to leave no loose ends,
> The husband of the said lady is called Joseph.

The shepherd mistakenly sustains that Jacob, the son of Isaac, was Mary's father-in-law, that is, Joseph's father, although Luke's Gospel says that Joseph was in fact the son of Heli who, in turn, was the son of Matthat and, therefore, Joseph's grandfather (Luke 3:23-38).

Yanguas's detailed account on Jesus's ancestry contrasts with the one found in Enzina's *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad*, in which he brings up the genealogy of the Virgin Mary, although he fails to fully develop it, giving lack of space as his reason to cut it short:

> Pésame que no ay espacio,
> que aun de aquessa yo sabría
> contar la genealogía
> de todo su generacio.

Él es hijo de David,
de David y de Abrahán (ll. 60-65).

TRANS.:
I regret the lack of space,
Although I would have known
how to narrate the lineage
Of all her [Mary's] generation.
He is son of David,
Of David and Abraham.

Lucas Fernández also provides well-developed prophetic and typological accounts. In his *Égloga o Farsa*, Macario, a wise character who is well-versed in the doctrine of the Church, teaches the shepherds how to interpret the wonders they have witnessed in the light of prophetic premonitions. Macario, adopting a priestly-like attitude, bids the clownish shepherds to stop their ludicrous behavior and get ready for the coming of Jesus, that is now drawing nigh:

No es tiempo ya más de estar
En burletas,
Que Dios no puede tardar,
Que no venga ya a encarnar,
Según hallo en los profetas (ll. 316-20).

TRANS.:
The time for mockery
Must now come to an end,
God will no longer tarry,
He will soon be incarnated,
As I can ascertain from the Prophets.

Macario's concern to give up their pranks and to focus on the immediacy of the Birth is an over-running idea all through the Advent liturgy.

The Epistle set aside for the first Sunday Mass[246] comes from St Paul's advice about giving up some sinful practices such as drinking, brawls and disputes, as requisites for salvation, which is now at hand (Romans 13: 11): "Fratres: Scientes, quia hora est iam nos de somno surgere. Nunc enim propior est nostra salus, quam cum credidimus" (Brethren, knowing that it is now the hour for us to rise from sleep. For now our salvation is nearer than when we believed). The Introit to the Mass on Ember Friday (taken from Psalm 118:151-52) also focuses on the same idea: "Prope es tu, Domine, et omnes viae tuae veritas: initio cognovi de testimoniis tuis: quia in aeternum tu es" (Thou art near, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth: I have known from the beginning concerning Thy testimonies, and Thou art for ever).

The shepherds fail to understand the key word "encarnar" (incarnate) in Macario's speech, but they reckon that he must be alluding to the Church. Thus, in view of Macario's liturgical knowledge, in ll. 322 Bonifacio asks him whether he is in fact a "sacristan" or an "abad" (a sacristan or an abbot). A catechetical explanation on the concept of incarnation follows, but it is interspersed with questions put forward by the other rustics. One of the ways in which Macario tries to teach that Baby Jesus is the true Messiah is by means of typology (ll. 334-50). Thus, he states that God revealed his coming to Adam (ll. 334-36), but also mentions as signs of Jesus's Birth Noah's ark (l. 341), and the Paschal Lamb (l. 342):

[246] This Mass is also known as "Missa ad te levavi," which is the beginning of Psalm 24:1-3, read in the Introit: "Ad te levavi animam meam: Deus meus, in te confide, etc." (*Missale Romanum* 1).

BONIFACIO
¿Sabéyslo de cierto, o no,
que encarnará Dios celeste?

MACARIO
Él mesmo lo reueló
a Adán luego que pecó
nel Paraýso terreste.
Y en figuras dió señal
su aduenimiento
en el arco celestial,
y en la sierpe de metal
nos dió gran conocimiento.
Y en el arca de Noé
y en el cordero pascual,
y aun en Ysac, el qual fue
obediente (ll. 331-44).

TRANS.:
BONIFACIO
Do you know for sure, or not,
That the Celestial God will be incarnated?

MACARIO
He himself revealed it
To Adam
Who sinned at the earthly Paradise.
And in figures He gave signs of his advent,
At the celestial arch,
And, through the metal serpent,
He gave us great knowledge.
And in Noah's ark,
And with the Pascal Lamb,
And even through Isaac
Who was obedient.

The catechesis goes on, and Jesus's genealogy is explained. The list starts with Isaac, whom he considers "obediente" (l. 343-44), i.e., obedient, and Abraham, who is said to be "varón prudente; l. 346" (a prudent man). Next he mentions King David whom he describes as a "valiante l. 349"

(brave). These qualities, that is, obedience, prudence and bravery, are precisely the characteristics the shepherds lack. A list of prophets comes next:

> Ossé y Varuch, Geremías,
> nos escriben que verná,
> Micheas y Malachías,
> Sophonías y Esaýas,
> y aun diz que no tardará (ll. 351-55).
>
> TRANS.:
> Oseah, Baruch, Jeremiah,
> Wrote that he will come.
> Micah and Malachi,
> Sophonias and Isaiah,
> Even say that he won't tarry.

The last line alludes to Jesus's imminent arrival, thus echoing the Introit of the Mass on Ember Friday. The news of the Birth is given by a shepherd called Marcelo who recounts how an angel told him about the Birth and where to find Him (ll. 361-80). Mary's virginity is questioned by Bonifacio, but Marcelo responds that her virginity was prophesized, although he does not mention Isaiah explicitly (ll. 381-90). Macario, the other wise character in the play, rejoices and mentions Daniel, who had foretold the time when the coming of the Messiah would take place (Daniel 9:24-27):

> Bendito el Dios de Ysrräel,
> que a su pueblo visitó,
> pues qu'el gran Hemanüel,
> profetado en Danïel,
> por saluarnos ya nació (ll. 391-94).
>
> TRANS.:
> Holy is the God of Israel
> That visited his people,
> For the great Immanuel,

Prophesized by Daniel,
Has been born to save us.

Fernández's *Auto o Farsa* contains a great amount of prophetic and typological references as well. The list of names is as follows: Micah (l. 344), Zachariah (l. 345), Abraham (l. 352), Isaac (l. 366), Jacob (l. 368), Isaiah (l. 379), Malachi (l. 392), Daniel (l. 395), Sophonias (l. 395), David (l. 399), and Ezekiel (l. 399), and Mosses (l. 469). Furthermore, between Ezekiel and Mosses, the text mentions Mary's descent from the Root of Jesse:

LLORENTE
Vamos, vamos adorar
la madre de aquel gran Rey
que nos viene a dar la ley
para auernos de saluar.

JUAN
Ésta es Virgen singular,
es la verga de Iessé.
¡O fuente viua de fe,
o clara estrella del mar!
¡Quién te alcançara a loar! (ll. 442-50).

TRANS.:
LLORENTE
Let's go, let's go worship
The mother of that great King,
Who is bringing the law,
To save us.

JUAN
This is a singular Virgin,
From the branch of Jesse
O, living source of life!
O, clear sea star!
If we could but praise you!

In these lines, Llorente shows his determination to worship Mary, the same strong determination that the shepherds in Luke's Gospel show in compliance with the angel's directions (Luke 8:15). Llorente's words also dwell on the double concern of Advent, which celebrates both the Nativity of Jesus and his second coming as judge. Thus, he refers to Mary's son as the great king who comes to bring the law (l. 444) and to save them (l. 445).

6.2 The Shepherds' Lineage

Jesus and Mary's divine lineage contrasts sharply with the shepherds' pride in their own ancestry and family. In this respect, with regard to the Spanish plays, Lihani states that "the shepherd's paradoxical pride in his humble family background was a bit of dramatic irony and was used by the authors as a comic device to entertain their noble audiences" ("Personal Elements" 252). Enzina's and Lucas Fernández's audiences were indeed aristocratic, although Lihani does not seem to take into account that there is a clear and deliberate contrast between the shepherds' family trees and that of Jesus.

Fray Íñigo de Mendoza is again a pioneer, as he is the first Castilian author to include the shepherds' genealogical awareness, although he does not develop Jesus's or Mary's lineage. In *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*, once the angel has delivered his message, the frightened shepherds first wonder

whether they should go back to the village to recount their experience,[247] but then they encourage one another to do so. Thus, one of the characters comically tries to convince another shepherd that he should go downtown, and he resorts to the patronymic, that is "a name derived from that of a father or male ancestor" ("Patronymic") to reassure him: "Tú eres hi de Pascual, | el del huerte coraçón; *copla* 127, ll. 1-2" (You are Pascual's son | The one with the strong heart). Fray Íñigo's work resorts to this device several times, as when the shepherds call a fellow herdsman whose next of kin is again highlighted: "Llamemos a Pascualejo, | el hi de Juan de Trascalle; stanza 143, ll. 1-2." The "hi de" (son of) is also expanded to "nieto de" (grandson of):

> ¡O, si vieras, hi de Mingo,
> nieto de Pascual el Viejo,
> en un pobre portalejo
> lo que oímos el domingo! (*copla* 150, ll. 2-5).
>
> TRANS.:
> O, if you had seen, Mingo's son,
> And Old Pascual's grandson,
> In a poor stable,
> What we heard and saw on Sunday!

On the other hand, the metronymic, that is, a "personal or family name derived from that of a mother or other female ancestor" ("Metronymic") is preferred by Enzina. Thus, the formula "hi de" (son of) is also used in *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad*, but linking the character

[247] Their return to the village to recount their experience is a re-elaboration of Luke 2:20: "[...] et reversi sunt pastores glorificantes et laudantes Deum in omnibus quae audierant et viderant sicut dictum est ad illos" ([...] and the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them).

to his mother; when Mateo summons the other shepherd, Juan, he says: "¡O, Juan, Juan, hi de Pascuala | Cata, cata, ¿acá estás tú? (ll. 46-47)" (Oh, John, John, Pascuala's son! | Why, why, are you here?).

Similarly, in *Chester*, as the play opens, the Second Shepherd tries to summon Tudd,[248] the Third Shepherd, by saying, "How, Tudd; come for thy father kyn" (l. 61), that is, for the sake of your father's kin. The First Shepherd claims that this will not work for his voice is "wonders dym"—he had already warned his friend that Tudd is deaf (l. 60)—and urges his mate to speak up and mention his family line: "Call Him Tudd, Tybbys sonne, | and then wyll the shrewe come" (ll. 65-66). The statement is given extra force when the First Shepherd urges appellation by "his damys name" (l. 68), that is, by his mother's name.[249] According to Lumiansky and Mills, the use of the metronymic was a common feature in surnames, including cases of widowhood,[250] second nuptials, or when the child was illegitimate. Other situations, especially in literature, may have included households with a henpecked husband, i.e., where the wife was a dominant partner.[251] Therefore, the assumption in *Chester* is that Tudd did

[248] Stevens and Cawley claim that most shepherds in the English plays are given nicknames as a way of emphasizing their down-to-earth nature (vol. 2: 484, note to l. 118). Not all the shepherds in the English plays are given names, though, a fact that contrasts with the Castilian practice in which all of them have clear distinctive names.

[249] On the origin of English surnames see Percy Hyde Reaney. *The Origins of English Surnames*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967. 76-80.

[250] In the *Second Shepherds' Play*, the Second Shepherd deals with men remarrying after becoming widowed (ll. 118-26).

[251] In *The First Shepherds' Play*, the First Shepherd refers to the Second Shepherds' troubles with his wife (ll. 141-43), although the henpecked husband is better developed in the *Second Shepherds' Play*, in which Secundus Pastor is the prototype of this stock character.

not know his father's kinfolk (Lumiansky and Mills, vol 2: 105), although the idea of husbands being ruled by their wives is also suggested:

> For, good men, this is not unknowen
> to husbandes that benne here abowt:
> that eych man muste bowe to his wife,
> and commonly for feare of a clowte.
> Thus for clowtes now care I;
> all ys for feare of our dame-keynn (ll. 85-90).

Juan del Enzina broadened the shepherd's lineage and the range of family relationships in his *Égloga Representada en la Noche de la Natividad* to include a wider range of relatives (brothers, cousins and uncles), and also their identification with certain trades, such as "gaiter" (piper), "herrero" (blacksmith), and "meseguero" (harvest man or cropper) (ll. 109-17).[252]

Lucas Fernández developed Mendoza's and Enzina's schematic ideas on genealogy even further. In his first play, *Comedia en Lenguaje y Estilo Pastoril* (ca. 1496) Fernández has Bras-Gil, a shepherd who defends his right to marry his beloved when he is confronted by her father's objections, thus suggesting that Bras-Gil comes of inferior family stock. In *Egloga o Farsa del Nascimiento*, Fernández also uses this device when Bonifacio and Gil debate as to who is the more skillful in rustic chores, and the former finally resorts to the "prominence" of his family clan just to outdo

[252] Enzina's *Representación al Nuestro muy Esclarecido Principe Don Juan de Castilla* may have had some influence on the formation of the pastoral genealogy. In this work he includes a passage on the dreadful effects of love where he combines certain family relationships to trades (some of which are the same as those found in the *Égloga*) and proper- names. On the influence of other plays on the shepherds' lineage see Lihani, "Personal Elements" 254.

his challenger. The combination of names and trades, namely, "herrero," "messeguero," and "gaytero" is a clear echo of Enzina's work:

> BONIFACIO
> Yo soy hijo del herrero
> de Rubiales,
> y nieto del messeguero.
> Prabos, Pascual y el gaytero
> son mis deudos caronales.
> Y aun es mi madre señora
> la hermitaña de san Bricio (ll. 156-62).

> TRANS.:
> BONIFACIO
> I'm the son of blacksmith
> Rubiales
> And the grandson of the harvest man.
> Prabos, Pascual, and the piper
> Are my next of kin.
> Not only that, my mother and lady
> Is St Bricio's hermit.

Gil, another character, brusquely interrupts Bonifacio, and comes up with the idea that all people are alike, since Adam is everyone's main ancestor:

> GIL
> ¡A, ruÿn seas tú y tus parientes!
>
> BONIFACIO
> ¿Tienes tú otros mijores?
>
> GIL
> Todos somos de vn terruño,
> baxos, altos y mayores,
> pobres, ricos y señores,
> de Aldrán viene todo alcuño (ll. 210-5).
>
> TRANS.:
> GIL
> A, shame on you and on your relatives!

BONIFACIO
Do you have any better ones?

GIL
We all come from the same lot
The short, the tall, the old,
The poor, the rich, the masters,
From Adam come all ancestry.

Fenández, in turn, also seems to have influenced the Portuguese Gil Vicente,[253] who incorporates and re-elaborates some of the former's ideas. In *Auto Pastoril Castelhano* a shepherd also named Gil recounts the family background of his friend's wife:

[. . .] el herrero es su tío,
Y el jurado es ahijado
Del abuelo de su madre;
Y de parte de su padre
Es prima de Bras Pelado:
Saquituerto, Rodelludo,
Papiharto, y Bodonales
Son sus primos caronales (vol 1: 28).

TRANS.:
[...] The blacksmith is her uncle,
And the juror is the godson
Of her mother's grandfather;
On his father's side,
She is Bras Pelado's cousin:
Saquituerto, Rodelludo,
Papiharto, and Bodonales
Are her cousins by blood.

As may be ascertained, once again, a device introduced by Fray Íñigo de Mendoza becomes more or less standardized in the subsequent shepherds'

[253] Vicente's *Auto Pastoril Castelhano* (1502) was written six years after Lucas Fernández's first comedia.

plays. Not only that, as in the case of the *Sayagués* convention, the shepherds' awareness of their ancestry was transfered as a topic to the non-religious pastoral dramas.

Chapter 7
Sound and Music

Music features prominently in most of the shepherds' plays analyzed in this study. Even if these dramas consist largely of spoken dialogue, songs and music cover an important part of the dramatic action. When approaching the role of music in the English biblical plays, Dutka suggests that "[music] is used in conjunction with the three components of drama: to delineate character, to establish setting, and to advance action" (6). As a matter of fact, music seems to share some common dramatic, narrative and theological functions in the English and in the Castilian dramas. For instance, there is a sharp contrast between the singing skills of redeemed and unredeemed characters. [254]

In addition, in a number of cases, music virtually divides the plays into two halves, thus contributing to a sense of scene division which otherwise would not have been evident. The dramas that commence with the news of Christ's Birth tend to open with the singing of the *Gloria*, whereas in the plays with a farcical onset it is the performance of harmonic music that triggers the Nativity scene proper, after the comic part.[255]

[254] This chapter is based on a previous article by the author. See Vicente Chacón Carmona. "Singing Shepherds, Discordant Devils: Music and Song in Medieval Pastoral Plays." *Medieval English Theatre* 32 (2010): 62-80.

[255] See Peter Happé. "Farcical Elements in the English Mystery Cycles." Ed. Leif Søndergaard, Wim Hüsken, Konrad Schoell. *Ludus: Medieval and Early Renaissance Theatre and Drama*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002. 29–43.

In fact, music is primarily used as a means to draw a virtual line between the unredeemed postlapsarian world and redeemed mankind.

7.1 Music before the Announcement of Christ's Birth

Music and/or harmony—or a lack thereof—feature as essential elements that help characterize the stage business in several plays. Music clearly divides the play into two halves in *The Painters' Playe* and in *The First* and *The Second Shepherds' Plays*. In addition, there is a significant transformation after the news of the Birth are delivered in the plays by Lucas Fernández, both in *Égloga o Farsa* and in *Auto o Farsa*, and also in Fray Íñigo's *Coplas de "Vita Christi"*. In these dramas, the first part is usually characterized by a complete lack of music, although there are instances in which characters do mention that they play instruments, and even try to sing.

However, these musical practices tend to be of poor quality when compared to the melodies produced by the heavenly beings, or the songs performed by the shepherds themselves after the angelic announcement in the second part of the dramas. The instruments that appear in the first part of plays are easily associated with a rural, pastoral setting, and are mostly wind instruments, although in the Castilian plays guitars are also mentioned. Yet, the shepherds who attempt to sing prior to the angelic announcement of Christ's Birth tend to be bad singers and may be identified with sinful practices or even with the Devil himself.

The combination of unredeemed characters and devilish creatures with poor musical aptitude finds a parallel in some medieval French dramas. Such is the case of Arnould Gréban's *Le Mystère de la Passion de Notre Sauveur Jésus-Christ*[256] and Marguerite de Navarre's *Comédie de la Nativité de Jésus-Christ*.[257] In the latter, an angel refers to Satan's speech as infernal "bruit," i.e., noise (ll. 1260–61), a fact that lies in sharp contrast with the angels' and the shepherds' songs which are consistently harmonic. The association between evil and cacophony is noteworthy in the case of Gréban's work, for he alternates and juxtaposes biblical and hellish scenes with those of the Nativity proper. Each of the hellish pieces is called "Scène Infernale" (infernal scene) by the author; needless to say, Lucifer and his hellish crew are the protagonists of these infernal pieces. Although these devils play instruments and sing, their performance is very poor when compared with that of the angels, thus making the contrast even more striking. In fact, as in Marguerite the Navarre's case, each of Gréban's "Scènes Infernales" is characterized by "bruit infernal," that is, hellish noise and infernal clatter. Satan and Lucifer actually complain about their own lack of musical skill:

> SATHAN
> Qui fait ceste mutacion?
> Lucifer, roi des ennemis,
> Vous hurlez comme ung lou famis,
> Quand vous voulez chanter ou rire.

[256] All quotes from this play are from Arnoul Gréban. *Le Mystère de la Passion d'Arnould Gréban*. Ed. Gaston Bruno, Paulin Paris, and Gaston Raynaud. Paris: F. Vieweg, 1878.

[257] All quotations from this play are from Marguerite de Navarre. *Les Comédies Bibliques*. Ed. Barbara Marczuk et al. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2000.

LUCIFER
Ha! Sathan, Dieu te puist maudire!
Quand est de mes ris et mes chans,
ilz sont malheureux et meschans;
ma noblesse et ma grant beaulté
est tournée en difformité,
mon chant en lamentacion,
mon ris en desolacion (ll. 3722–32)

TRANS.:
SATAN
What has caused this mutation?[258]
Lucifer, King of Devils,
You howl like a starving wolf
When you wish to sing or laugh.

LUCIFER
May God curse you, Satan!
As for my laughter and my songs,
They are (caused by) ill-luck and mischance.
My nobility
And my beauty is turned into deformity;
My song into lamentation,[259]
My laughter into desolation.

Astaroth, another devil, is trying in vain to find the right key when he hears a trumpet ("busine"): "c'est la note a prendre mon ton (l. 3759)" (this is the note to take my key). That trumpet serves to announce the meeting of the devils: "Belzebuth la busine sonne | courons y veoir s'on y ordonne | quelque apointement infernal (ll. 3761-63)" (Belzebuth, the trumpet is sounding | Let us run and see; | Some infernal get-together must be starting).

[258] "In medieval and early modern solmization: the change from one hexachord to another, achieved by changing the syllable applied to a given note." ("Mutation").
[259] A variation on *Versa est in luctum cithara mea* from the Mass for the Dead (Job 30:30).

As in Gréban's drama, a wind instrument is similarly used in *The Chester Painters' Playe* to summon the shepherds. Primus Pastor first yells his mate's name and, when he fails to appear, resorts to his horn:

> But noe fellowshippe here have I
> save myselfe alone, in good faye;
> therfore after one faste wyll I crye.
> But first will I drinke, if I maye.
> *Hic potat Primus Pastor*
> Howe, Harvye, howe!
> Drive thy sheepe to the lowe.
> Thow maye not here excepte I blowe,
> as ever have I heale.
> *Hic flabit Primus Pastor* (ll. 41-48 and stage directions).

A few verses below, he blows his horn again to call their boy-servant, Garcius (ll. 161-64). Garcius himself hints that the other three shepherds are unmusical:

> Fye on your loynes and your liverye,
> your liverastes, livers, and longes,
> your sose, your sowse, your saverraye,
> your sittinge withowt any songes! (ll. 202-5).

In Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa*, a boastful Bonifacio first appears and claims that he actually plays a wind instrument, the "caramillo," a sort of flute or flageolet.[260] He comments that he is a talented singer, dancer and instrumentalist, among other things: "Pues en cantar y baylar, | y el caramillo tocar, | siempre so el mejor del hato (ll. 43-45)" (actually, as regards singing and dancing | And playing the flageolet, | I am always the best of the group). However, as the play advances, he is undisclosed as an indolent,

[260] "A small wind instrument, having a mouthpiece at one end, six principal holes, and sometimes keys." ("Flageolet").

shiftless, lazy being whose sheep are dying because of his inefficiency as a herdsman. Therefore, his alleged musical skill may only be understood as yet another way to glorify himself in speech in a self-admiring manner. Actually, no further references to his gift as a musician are mentioned until the end of the play when all the characters sing together.

Another example in which a character's inability to sing seems to hint at his unredeemed spiritual state is found in a work by Portuguese Gil Vicente, the *Auto dos Quatro Tempos*, in which the angels clearly sing (all stage directions indicate that each angel "cantiga/canta," that is, chants or sings, while each unredeemed shepherd simply speaks ("fala"). In Marguerite de Navarre's play, for example, there is a sharp contrast between the redeemed singing shepherds who have just worshipped Jesus in Bethlehem and the Devil who, unable to sing, tries to talk them into thinking that what they have just witnessed at the Manger is a mere delusion (ll. 964–91). As a matter of fact, Satan does not sing when he tempts the shepherds, whose songs seem to shield them from any evil:

> Les Bergers, en chantant :
> Une Vierge qui est mere,
> A un beau Filz enfanté ;
> Qui n'ha nul que Dieu pou Pere,
> Ce mot soit bien hault chanté (ll. 976–83)
>
> TRANS.:
> The Shepherds, singing :
> A virgin who is a mother
> Has given birth to a fair son;
> Whose father is no other but God,
> These words should be sung very loud.

Satan is eventually aware of his defeat and accepts the fact that Jesus is Savior. Finally, when God the Father asks his angels to descend upon the earth, He encourages them to sing (ll. 1254–55), and they do so while they praise their Creator (ll. 1275–79). Yet, the aforementioned non-musical devils are not the only instances of discordant or unmusical demons in medieval drama. In Hildegard von Bingen's *Ordo Virtutum* (*The Play of the Virtues*), a 12th-c. musical morality play in Latin, Anima, the soul, is tempted by the Devil, but is ultimately saved by the Virtues. All of the characters in the play sing, with the exception of Diabolus, whose speeches are written in prose and are spoken, not sung.[261]

Nevertheless, this virtual absence of music in the first part of the plays or its identification with sin or evil seems to have its source in the liturgical restrictions to music during Advent, whereas the abundance of music and harmony found after the announcement of Christ's Birth clearly mirrors the liturgy for the Christmas season, which conveys the joy of the Birth through music, among other devices. In addition to the restrictions on eating and drinking, the Church restricts the use of song and instrumental music, as the texts set aside for the season in the Divine Office clearly indicate. Such is the case of Isaiah 24:7-16, which is read during the second week in Advent and actually links the mandatory fast and the practice of music; to be more precise, the text links the ban on singing

[261] For an edition of the *Ordo Virtutum*, see Hildegard von Bingen. Ed. Peter Dronke. *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*. Cambridge: CUP, 1994.

to the consumption of wine. The text comes from the third *Lectio* on the second Friday of Advent:

> Luxit vindemia, infirmata est vitis, ingemuerunt omnes qui laetabantur corde; Cessavit gaudium tympanorum, quievit sonitus laetantium, conticuit dulcedo citharae. Cum cantico non bibent vinum; amara erit potio bibentibus illam. Attrita est civitas vanitatis, clausa est omnis domus, nullo introëunte. Clamor erit super vino in plateis, deserta est omnis laetitia, translatum est gaudium terrae. Relicta est in urbe solitudo, et calamitas opprimet portas. Quia haec erunt in medio terrae in medio populorum, quomodo si paucae olivae quae remanserunt excutiantur ex olea et racemi, cum fuerit finita vindemia. Hi levabunt vocem suam, atque laudabunt: cum glorificatus fuerit Dominus, hinnient de mari (*Breviarium Romanum* 150).
>
> TRANS.: The vintage hath mourned, the vine hath languished away, all the merryhearted have sighed. The mirth of timbrels hath ceased, the noise of them that rejoice is ended, the melody of the harp is silent. They shall not drink wine with a song: the drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of vanity is broken down, every house is shut up, no man cometh in. There shall be a crying for wine in the streets: all mirth is forsaken: the joy of the earth is gone away. Desolation is left in the city, and calamity shall oppress the gates. For it shall be thus in the midst of the earth, in the midst of the people, as if a few olives, that remain, should be shaken out of the olive tree: or grapes, when the vintage is ended. These shall lift up their voice, and shall give praise: when the Lord shall be glorified, they shall make a joyful noise from the sea.

As may be ascertained, the restrictions on singing and wine point to the Advent fast, whereas the last line reminds the faithful that only when the Lord has arrived should people lift up their voice and sing praises, which is actually what the shepherds do after the angelic announcement.

It seems, thus, that the essence of these liturgical concerns were in fact taken into account in the composition of the dramas. For instance, if the aforementioned quotes from *The Chester Painters' Playe* are analyzed under

this light, it may be ascertained that the *Chester* playwright was probably bringing together two key elements in the Advent period: fasting and music. As seen above, the shepherd first decides to have a drink before blowing his horn (l. 44), then he objects to the menu of the other three (ll. 202-3) and to the fact that they are not singing (ll. 203-5). As expected, the shepherds fail to comprehend the divine symbols presented unto them and do not understand the angel or his song.

Similarly, the association between food and poor singing or poor musical skill is found in *The Second Shepherds' Play*, for Mak's illegal actions (stealing the sheep) are clearly matched by his poor qualities as a singer. He is in fact indirectly associated with the Devil—and even with the Antichrist—several times throughout the play.[262] This is the case when, as seen in Chapter 4, Mak reveals his yearning to fill his belly (ll. 330-31) and Tertius Pastor proverbially remarks: "Seldom lyys the dewyll | Dede by the gate" (ll. 332-33).[263] Later, as Mak sets back home, the other shepherds hear him sing a lullaby, and one of them comments that he is not actually a gifted singer: "hard I neuer none crak | So clere out of toyne" (ll. 688–89).

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[262] In l. 313, Secundus Pastor says: "Mak, the dewill in youre ee! (i. e., The Devil in your eye)." See related note in Stevens and Cawley (vol. 2: 501). See also the discussion on Mak and the Devil by Ross "Symbol and Structure in the Secunda Pastorum" 122–49. On Mak's association with the Antichrist, see William M. Manly. "Shepherds and Prophets: Religious Unity in the Towneley Secunda Pastorum." *PMLA* 78 (1963): 151-55.

[263] There is a Scottish version of this proverb: "Seldome lyes the divel dead by ane dycksyd." Quoted in Robert Henryson. *The Poems and Fables of Robert Henryson*. Ed. H. Harvey Wood. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1933. 245. See related note in Stevens and Cawley (2 501).

As seen above, in Fernández's work, Bonifacio's never actually shows his abilities to play the flute in the course of the play; instead, he only proves to be interested in eating, as he joins his fellow shepherds at the pantagruelian meal discussed above in Chapter 4. It is interesting to note that in Gréban's work, the devils' musical performance is associated with starving animals. Lucifer commands the devils to sing a "silete" (l. 3832),[264] although this only reinforces the impression of their lack of musical skill, when compared to the heavenly beings, as they are said to sing "comme des marmottes ou vieux corbeaux famélique" (ll. 3846–47) (that is, like groundhogs, or old starving crows).

The absence of music in the first part of the dramas also seems to mirror the spirit of the liturgy of Advent which is commonly referred to as a "muted season"[265] for a moderation in the use of music and instrumentation is prescribed. In this sense, the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* reads: "During Advent the organ and other musical instruments should be used with a moderation that reflects the character of this season, but does not anticipate the full joy of the Nativity of the Lord."[266] It is not until halfway through the season, as from the third Sunday, when music may be actually played again and the faithful are invited to express the an-

[264] For a discussion of *silete* as a musical genre which developed into a musical interlude to cover gaps in the action, see the modernized version of Arnoul Gréban. *Le Mystère de la Passion de Notre Sauveur Jésu-Christ*. Eds. Micheline Combarieu du Grès and Jean Subrenat. Paris: Gallimard, 1987. 471; see also Peter Macardle *The St Gall Passion Play: Music and Performance*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007. 165–72.

[265] See "Celebrating the Season of Advent Liturgical Leaflet."

[266] See *Roman Missal: Third Typical Edition, Ritual Edition*. Ed. Archdiocese of Chicago. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2011. 71.

ticipated joy as they await Christmas. Advent is in fact characterized by a mixture of feelings of both joy and expectation and sorrow. The many "alleluias" inserted in the liturgical texts for the season bear witness to the joy, whereas the grief is expressed by means of somewhat sorrowful ferial prayers. Also, during this waiting time which ends at Christmas, churches become more sober as far as ornamentation is concerned.[267]

Furthermore, this period of expectancy and sorrow is marked by the omission of the *Gloria* and the *Te Deum* hymns from the liturgy. The *Te Deum*, also known as the Ambrosian Hymn or Song of the Church, is recited or sung either after Mass or during the Divine Office or as a separate religious ceremony.[268] The name of the hymn derives from its opening Latin words:

> Te Deum laudamus:
> Te Dominum confitemur.
> Te aeternum Patrem,
> Omnis terra veneratur.
>
> TRANS.:
> We praise thee, O God:
> We acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
> All the earth doth worship thee,
> The Father everlasting.

[267] Purple is the color used for the liturgical vestments of this season whereas white is used at Christmas.

[268] The religious ceremonies include the election of a pope, the consecration of a bishop, the canonization of a saint or a religious profession. The recitation of the hymn is also attached to civil ceremonies such as the publication of treaties of peace, royal coronation, promulgation of a constitution, etc. On the recitation during religious acts, see Paul Westermeyer. *Te Deum: The Church and Music: a Textbook, a Reference, a History, an Essay*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. On the usage of the hymn for civil occasions, see for instance, Marcelino Díez Martínez. *El Te Deum de 1812 en Cádiz: El Día de la Constitución*. Cádiz: Servicio de Extensión Universitaria de la Universidad de Cádiz, 2012.

The *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* hymn is also known as the Greater Doxology[269] or the Angelic Hymn, often abbreviated to the *Gloria in Excelsis* or simply the *Gloria*. The hymn begins with the angels' words in the Annunciation to the shepherds in Luke 2:14.[270] Both the *Te Deum* and the *Gloria*, as well as the sound of instrumental music, are suppressed during the Advent services.[271] The austere mood of the liturgy does not change until the third Sunday in Advent or Rose Sunday[272] when the penitential character of the season is relaxed as it also happens on the fourth Sunday of Lent. Instead of purple, rose colored—reddish brown—vestments representing joy may be used, flowers on the altar are allowed again and the organ may be played during the services. However, it is not until Christmastide when the *Gloria*—and the *Te Deum*—are recited or sung again.

7.2 The *Gloria* in the Plays

Most English and Castilian plays describe the angels as musical beings and are in fact associated with the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*. There is however in most cases little or no textual evidence or records to support the idea

[269] As opposed to the Minor Doxology or shorter hymns of praise to God such as the *Gloria Patri*, also known as the Glory Be to the Father or, colloquially, the Glory Be.

[270] See "Gloria in Excelsis Deo."

[271] In the Roman Rite the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* is not included in the Liturgy of the Hours, and is sung or recited in the Mass, after the Kyrie, on Sundays outside Lent and Advent and on solemnities and feasts.

[272] This Mass is also known as *Missa 'Gaudete'* after the Introit (Philippians 4:4-6): "Gaudete in Domino semper: iterum dico gaudete. Modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus: Dominus enim prope est" (Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, rejoice. Let your modesty be known to all men: for the Lord is nigh. Be nothing solicitous: but in everything by prayer let your petitions be made known to God; *Missale Romanum* 6).

that the hymn was invariably sung in the course of the performance. To begin with, apart from the shepherds' attempts to make out and imitate the Latin words—which they fail to do—the actual words of the Greater Doxology are not specified entirely, perhaps because those words were well-known to most people. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the actual *Gloria* that features in the plays, that is, "Gloria in excelsis Deo et in Terra pax hominubus," has a liturgical origin, and is actually different from the *Vulgate* version found in Luke 2:14, which reads "Gloria in altissimis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus."

The *Gloria* is therefore restricted to the angels, as stage directions or other characters clearly indicate both in the English and Castilian plays. Heaven is usually described in medieval drama and also in the tradition of the Church as a musical place, and so angels, as its direct representatives, sing 'heavenly'—that is, harmonious—songs, thus turning their scenes into musical episodes. Actually, one of the Tridentine Mass "prefaces" includes the formula:

> "Et ideo cum Angelis et Archangelis, cum Thronis et Dominationibus cumque omni militia caelestis excercitus himnum gloriae tuae canimus, sine fine dicentes [. . .]" (*Missale Romanum* 323-24).
>
> TRANS.: And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim [. . .].

Right after the priest recites that formula, the *Sanctus* is either recited or actually sung in the Mass.

In *The Chester Painters' Playe*, for instance, a stage direction at l. 337 reads: "Tunc cantet Angelus: 'Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis' (stage direction at l. 337) (Then the Angel shall sing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will"). Similarly, in *The Second Shepherds' Play*, the stage direction at l. 919 indicates that "Angelus cantat 'Gloria in excelsis' (The Angel sings, "Glory in the highest"). Conversely, in *The First Shepherds' Play* the angel addresses the sleeping shepherds in the vernacular, although not with the *Gloria*:

> Herkyn, hyrdes! Awake!
> Gyf louyng ye shall;
> He is borne for youre sake,
> Lorde perpetuall.
> He is comen to take
> And rawnson you all;
> Youre sorowe to slake,
> Kyng emperiall,
> He behestys.
> That chyld is borne
> At Bethelem this morne;
> Ye shall fynde hym beforne
> Betwix two bestys (ll. 426-38).

Nonetheless, right after this speech is spoken, the shepherds' words seem to point to the fact that the scene encompasses music, as Primus Pastor indicates:

> A, godys dere dominus!
> What was that sang ?
> It was wonder curiose
> with small noytys emang (ll. 439-42).[273]

[273] Tertius Pastor's words also seem to imply that the angel actually sings, as he describes what he heard as a "mery gle" (l. 471), that is, a happy melody or sound.

N-Town opens with the angel announcing the Birth to the shepherds in English (ll. 1-13), and a stage direction at l. 1 points out that sing the *Gloria* to the herdsmen: "Angelus ad pastores dicit 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo."' Even if the term "dicit" is used, music is nonetheless implied by the angel, who tells the shepherds that owing to the coming of Jesus he is determined to "synge a joyful stevene," i.e., a merry song (l. 7). Later on, a stage direction at l. 61 reads "'Gloria in Excelsis Deo' cantent" (i.e., they sing 'Glory to God in the Highest'). Actually, Jodogne argues that in French medieval religious drama, the terms *cantare* (to sing) and *dicere* (to say), were interchangeable (11). Similarly, Kovács sustains that, in the Catalan dramatic tradition, it is not until the 16th century when the distinction between the two terms is clear (265-67). In *N-Town*, however, it is not specified whether or not the singing would have included angels and shepherds; by analogy with the rest of texts, it may be assumed that only the heavenly beings sang the *Gloria*.[274]

However, *The N-Town Play* is not the only play in which the *Gloria* features twice. In *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*, two different stage directions specify that it is sung twice, although the scene seems to imply simultaneous actions. A first stage direction at l. 250 reads "There the angelis syng 'Glorea in exselsis Deo'" although, as in the other plays, the actual words are not included and the angels do not actually deliver

[274] The fact that the singing of the *Gloria* is included twice in this play seems to be the result of successive revisions of the text over time (Spector vol. 2: 471-2).

their speeches.[275] In fact, as seen above in Chapter 4, what comes after the first singing the *Gloria* by the angels is the shepherds' analysis of the words (l. 267) and then their decision to travel to Bethlehem,[276] as Pastor I explains:

> [...] now goo we hence
> To worschipe that child of hy manyffecence
> And that we ma syng in his presence
> "Et in tarra pax omynibus" (ll. 260-63).

As may be ascertained, the shepherd invites his mates to sing the *Gloria*, although he refers to it by quoting one line of the hymn in corrupted Latin (l. 263). The fact is that right after that moment, there is no textual evidence that may indicate that they do sing the Angelic Hymn. Actually, a stage direction at l. 263 indicates that the shepherds do sing, but theirs is just a popular song in the vernacular:[277] "There the scheppardis syngis 'Ase I Owt Rodde [...]'." The same stage direction at l. 263 specifies that Joseph speaks after the herdsman's song is sung[278] and he refers to the music he has just heard:

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[275] Two angels feature in this play, and the announcement of Christ's Birth is split into two parts.

[276] In Marguerite de Navarre's play, the shepherds set off for Bethlehem and sing as well: "Partons, chantons, tous ensemble d'accord; l. 670)" (Let us go, let us sing, all together in harmony).

[277] The only extant source for this song and the rest included in the pageant is Thomas Sharp's *Dissertation on the Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries Anciently Performed at Coventry* (1825) since, as explained above in Chapter 1, the original manuscript was destroyed by the fire that burnt down the Birmingham Free Library where the manuscript was kept (Sharp). For a transcription of this and the other songs in the play with their scores see King and Davidson 166-73.

[278] "There the scheppardis syngis 'Ase I Owt Rodde and Josoff sayth:" (stage direction at l. 26).

> Now, Lorde, this noise þat I do here
> With this grett solemnete,
> Gretly amendid hath my chere.
> I trust hy nevis schortly wol be (ll. 264-47).

Joseph refers to the music in ll. 264-47 in terms that would not actually be used to describe the popular song interpreted by the shepherds, but to the *Gloria* sung by the celestial messengers. The term "noise" (l. 264) actually refers to music here, not to the modern idea of loud or unpleasant sounds.[279] In *The Shrewsbury Officium Pastorum*, the term is also employed to describe the angelic song, although in this case the text does no mention that the *Gloria* is sung: the Third Shepherd comments, however, on the "nobull noyes" made by "an angel bri3t" (ll. 16–17). The fact that Joseph alludes to the angels' music is supported by his description of the song as being performed "with grett solemnete" (l. 265), which would not be a characteristic of the popular "Ase I Owt Rodde." Then, the *Gloria* is sung for a second time, as the stage direction at l. 267 shows: "There the angellis syng 'Gloria in exsellsis' ageyne." The angels, however, do not intervene again right away, and what follows instead is a conversation between Joseph and Mary (ll. 268-82). Even though the shepherds had already shown their determination to go worship the baby, for they had previously learnt about the particulars of the Birth through the angels, the celestial beings reappear again (ll. 283-86). As Pastor I announced in l.

[279] The shepherds' scene is sandwiched between two speeches by Joseph. In his last words before the shepherds intervene, he begs for some help—midwives—to assist Mary with the delivery: "Sum helpe of wemenn God ma send | Thatt Mare, full off grace, pleisyd ma be" (ll. 190-91). No midwives feature in the play, though, and when he returs to the stable, Mary has already given birth: "A, Josoff, husebond, cum heddur anon; | My chylde ys borne þat ys Kyng of blys" (ll. 269-68).

262, the shepherds sing in the presence of the child, as a stage direction at l. 312 specifies: "There [at the stable] the scheppardis syngith ageyne and goth forthe of þe place [. . .]." However, what the shepherds actually sing is not mentioned, but they very likely sang a popular song similar to the one interpreted before they start their trip to Bethlehem.

Interestingly, in the few instances in which angels feature in Spanish plays, namely, Gómez Manrique's *Representaçión* and Juan del Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, no singing or music is implied in the text, not even the singing of the *Gloria* itself. Gómez Manríque's play is unusual in that it includes three angels. A first unnamed angel announces Christ's Birth to the shepherds in the vernacular (l. 57-64), and later on a quite unique scene takes place, in which three angels,[280] namely "San Gabriel" (Gabriel), "San Miguel" (Michael), and "San Rafael" (Raphael), also worship the child, although no singing is implied. Their first speech is a loose translation of the Latin *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*:

> LOS ÁNGELES
> Gloria al Dios soberano
> que reina sobre los çielos,
> e paz al linaje humano (ll. 102-3).[281]

[280] They are in fact archangels, i. e., angels of a higher rank. The play simply calls them "ángeles" (angels), as in the New Testament. For example, those giving messages to Mary, Joseph and the shepherds are called angels. Other instances of angels are the ones who minister to Christ after his temptation in the wilderness, or the one who visits Christ in his agony; angels are also found at the tomb of the risen Christ, and angels free the Apostles from prison too. The word archangel is only used twice, once in 1 Thessalonians, and then in the Epistle of Jude. See "Angel" and "Archangel."

[281] In de Navarre's play an angel sings or recites the *Gloria* in French: "Gloire soit au Dieu des dieux; ll. 612–23) (Glory be to the God of gods).

TRANS.:
THE ANGELS
Glory to the sovereign God
Who reigns over the heavens,
And peace to the human lineage.

Beside the fact the Michael describes himself as a member of the "coros çelestiales; l. 115" (celestial choirs), no other mention of music appears in the text.

In most Castilian works, the news about Christ's Birth tends to be undisclosed by one or more of the shepherds who claim to have heard the voice of angels, described as musical beings. As seen in Chapter 4, Fray Íñigo de Mendoza is the pioneer, for his *Coplas de "Vita Christi"* is the first Castilian work in which the reader/audience learns about the words of the angels through the shepherds, who comment on what they have heard. Thus, in stanza 155 the words of the Greater Doxology[282] are somehow echoed:

Aún tengo en la mi mamoria
sus cantos, asmo que creo
unos gritavan vitoria,
los otros cantavan groria,
otros indaçielçis Deo,
otros Dios es pietatis,
otros et in tierra paz
homanibus vanitatis,
otros buena voluntatis (*copla* 155).

TRANS.:
I still have in my mind
Their songs, I believe
That some of them proclaimed victory,

[282] See above Section 4.4 in which the shepherds fail to comprehend the words of this hymn.

> The others sang of glory,
> And others said indaçielcis Deo,
> Others Dios es pietatis,
> Others et in tierra paz
> Homanibus vanitatis,
> Others buena voluntatis.

The incipit to Juan del Enzina's *Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias* announces that an angel is in charge of announcing the Birth: "Un Ángel aparesce y el nascimiento del Salvador les anunciando, ellos con diversos dones a su visitación se aparejan" (An angel appears and, once the Birth has been announced, they [the shepherds] get several presents and they arrange to visit Him). The angel only provides the good news and gives the details of the delivery (ll. 192-208), but no music whatsoever is implied.[283]

In Yanguas's *Égloga*, the fact that the shepherds actually learn the news from angels is also highlighted at the beginning, even though no heavenly messengers actually feature in it. However, the play turns out to be a musical work. The incipit of the play reads:

> Égloga nuevamente trovada por Hernando de Yanguas en loor de la Natividad de Nuestro Señor. En la cual se introduzen cuatro pastores, cuyos nombres son: MINGO SABIDO, GIL PATA, BENITILLO, PERO PANÇA. Los cuales, informados de los ángeles cómo Cristo era ya nacido, vienenle adorar y ofrecen sus dones; y Nuestra Señora dales gracias.
>
> TRANS.: Eclogue recently composed by Hernando de Yanguas in praise of the Nativity of our Lord, in which, four shepherds are introduced, whose names are Mingo Sabido, Gil Pata, Benitillo, Pero Pança. Once informed by the angels how Christ has already been born, they go worship Him and offer their gifts; and Our Lady thanks them.

[283] In fact, together with Manrique's play, these are the only two instances of unmusical shepherds' plays in the catalogue.

As seen in Chapter 4, Pero, one of the shepherds, indicates that the angels spoke in Latin. They do not seem to have recited the *Gloria*, but Pero claims that they said "Puer natus est nobis, el gran Salvador; ll. 69-72" (Puer natus est nobis, the Great Savior). The shepherd also mentions that the celestial beings prayed Matins, played some instruments and sang some songs (ll. 75-76) It is interesting how the playwright links the temporal framework of the play to the liturgical period through the *Sayagués*-speaking shepherd who mimics the angel's words. Actually, "Puer natus est nobis" (Unto us a child is born) is the Introit of the third Mass[284] at Christmas ("Ad Tertiam Missam in die Nativitatis Domini"),[285] taken from Isaiah 9 and Psalm 97:

> Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis: cujus imperium super humerum ejus: et vocabitur nomen ejus, magni consilii Angelus (Isaiah 9:6). Cantate Domino canticum novum: quia mirabilia fecit (Psalm 97:1).
>
> TRANS.: A child is born to us, and a Son is given to us: Whose government is upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called, the Angel of Great Counsel. Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: because He hath done wonderful things.

[284] Robert Cummings describes the musical composition in the following terms: "The first verse of the antiphon opens with soaring, melismatic singing on a text about the Christ Child. This opening panel is followed by a Psalm verse and then by a lesser doxology, the latter two sections sharing the same music. But the Puer Natus Est Nobis proper and its music return to close out the chant. The outer sections are more colorful and ornate in the serene flow of their music, while the Psalm verse and lesser doxology music are a bit more somber, their text urging praise to the Lord and glory to the Trinity" (Cummings).

[285] See *Missale Romanun* 25.

In the medieval and later in the Tridentine Mass, the Introit was normally sung as the celebrants entered the church.[286] The antiphon *Puer Natus Est Nobis* was reinterpreted by composers such as Thomas Tallis (ca.1505-1585), who used it as a *cantus firmus* for his Christmas Mass.[287] Some musicologists such as M. Atkinson[288] have studied the melody of this chant and usually point to the fact that the first line of the antiphon is rather conversational and appears to focus around one note. The high pitch of the antiphon relates also to the state of joy inherent in the theology that celebrates the Birth of the Messiah. Owing to the importance of the day, this chant reflects an overwhelming joy and a state of happiness.

This state of joy is apparent in López de Yanguas's play, as it actually opens with shepherds playing various instruments and dancing. A first stage direction at l. 1 already points to the use of wind instruments: "Y llega Mingo Sabido, tañendo una gaita [...]" (And Mingo Sabido, arrives playing his bagpipe). Mingo, extremely happy at the good news, requests the rest to play music and to dance:

> ¡Las gaitas, guitarras, rabés repiquemos
> y las churumbelas muy huerte tangamos!
> ¡Cordojos, renzillas de nos despidamos
> y brincos, corcovos y saltos echemos!

[286] A cantor would sing the first word of the chant to establish the pitch. See Paul Griffiths. *Breve Historia de la Música Occidental*. Madrid: Akal, 2006. 24.

[287] Tallis's work was probably written during the short reign of Mary I, a theory engendered by his deployment of seven voice parts (two altos, two tenors, one baritone and two basses). According to Pritchard, the lack of a treble part suggests it was composed for Philip II of Spain's Chapel Royal choir (which apparently did not use boys' voices) when he lived in England after marrying Mary, pointing to Christmas 1554 as its likely commission date (Pritchard).

[288] For an analysis of the tone, see Charles M. Atkinson. *The Critical Nexus: Tone-System, Mode, and Notation in Early Medieval Music*. Cary: OUP, 2008. 94, 179.

¡Los hatos y migas y burras dejemos,
quitemos las tristes capillas de nos!
¡Que nuevas hay, nuevas, que es nacido Dios!
¡Gil Pata, Gil Pata, ven, ven y bailemos! (ll. 1-8)

TRANS.:
Let's play our bagpipes, guitars and rabels,[289]
The flageolets, let's blow them with strength!
Let's say goodbye to our sorrows and fights
And let's cut a caper, prance around and jump!
Let's leave the cattle, the *migas*, the donkeys,
Let's remove our sad capes from us!
There is news, there is, God's Son is born!
Gil Pata, Gil Pata, come hither and let's dance!

Mingo's speech sets the tone of the play and more references to the shepherds performing instruments follow. Thus, a stage direction at l. 8 reads "Entra Gil Pata tañendo una guitarra" (Enters Gil Pata playing a guitar); then another stage direction at l. 24 specifies that Benito comes onstage playing an arrabel: "Aquí llega Benito tañendo un arrabé y llamando" (At this point Benito arrives playing an arrabel and crying out). A few lines below, it is announced that Pero enters playing his "tamboril; stage direction at l. 57" (drum).

God's messengers do not feature in Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa*, but the play includes a significant amount of music; the announcement of Christ's Birth is made in this case by a shepherd named Juan. As explained above, the shepherds primarily believe that Juan must have heard the sound of animals, but he insists that what he came across was an angel who actu-

[289] Stearns and Stanley describe the rabel, arrabel, robel, rovel as a bowed stringed instrument from Spain, a rustic folk-fiddle descended from the medieval rebec which perhaps descended from the Arab *rabab*. The instrument generally has two or three strings of gut or steel, or sometimes twisted horse-hair (Stearns and Stanley 196).

ally sang "grolia Deo | en el cielo deue hauer, | y en la tierra paz tener (ll. 285-88)" (groria Deo | In heaven there must be | And peace on Earth). Likewise, in *Auto o Farsa*, Marcelo, the fourth shepherd, is the one in charge of bringing the good news in lieu of a heavenly messenger, and he also claims with great joy[290] that he had heard the news from a singing angel:

> MARCELO
> ¡Buenas nueuas! ¡Nueuas buenas!
>
> BONIFACIO
> O, Marcelo, llega acá.
>
> GIL
> ¿Qué tales?
>
> MARCELO
> De gozo llenas.
> Descruziemos ya de penas,
> qu'es Cristo nascido ya.
>
> BONIFACIO
> No es possibre.
>
> MARCELO
> Sí es possibre.
>
> GIL
> Dilo bien.
>
> BONIFACIO
> Ora Dios de ti nos llibre.
>
> MARCELO
> Vn ángel vimos besibre
> que dizcas nasció en Bethlén (ll. 361-70).

[290] In the introduction to the play, the author presents the shepherds and describes Marcelo and his role in the following terms: "[. . .] Y el quarto [pastor] es MARCELO. El qual viene muy regocijado a contarles cómo es nascido ya el saluador" ([. . .] And the fourth [shepherd] is Marcelo, who arrives with great joy in order to tell the rest that the Savior has already been born).

TRANS.:
MARCELO
Good news! Good news!

BONIFACIO
Oh, Marcelo, come here.

GIL
What about?

MARCELO
Full of joy.
Let's forget our sorrows
Because Christ has already been born.

BONIFACIO
It's not possible.

MARCELO
Yes, it is.

GIL
Say it right.

BONIFACIO
May God rid us of your presence now.

MARCELO
We spotted an angel quite clearly
Who said that (Christ) was born in Bethlehem

An exegetical exposition of the Birth takes place in the form of a dialogue and some details such as Mary's virginity are discussed by the shepherds (l. 361 and ff). Although Marcelo does not actually mention the angel having sung the *Gloria*, Macario, the wise character of the lot, shows his joy by offering a loose paraphrase of the hymn:

¡O gloria de nueua gloria!
¡O inmensa paz de paz!
¡O vitoria de vitoria!,
do fallesce la memoria
con memoria de tal haz,

¿Dónde están ya mis sentidos?
Yo, ¿quién soy?
En gozo son conuertidos
nuestros llantos y gemidos,
todos este día de oy (ll. 421-30).[291]

TRANS.:
Oh Glory of new Glory!
Oh immense peace of peace!
Oh victory of victory!
It seems that my memory fails
With the memory of such beams,[292]
Where are my senses now?
I, who am I?
Into joy they were turned
All our cries and moans,
All of them today.

Even though the shepherds do not actually manage to sing the *Gloria* in any of the plays, the angels' joy and musical skill seem to have been somehow transferred unto them. The angels, as God's representatives, stand for Heaven's harmony, and their high-quality vocal music is acknowledged by the rustics themselves in most plays. Thus, in Lucas Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa*, Marcelo says: "¿No vos digo que no ha vn hora | que vn ángel vino a desora, cantando por dulces artes? ll. 373–75" (Haven't I told you that not even an hour ago | An angel suddenly appeared, | Singing sweetly and skilfully?). Likewise, in the *Auto o Farsa*, Juan rejoices in the following manner: "¡Quán alegre estoy! ¡Qüánto | desde que oý aquel

[291] The opening of the first two lines seems to be a re-elaboration of the so-called Great O-Antiphons of Advent, which the character actually reinterprets later. See below for an explanation on this matter.

[292] The term "haz" can actually refer to the light beams produced by the angel or to a troop of heavenly beings. See "Haz."

dulce canto! ll. 269–70" (How happy I am | From the moment I heard that sweet song!).

In this sense, Stevens argues that the actual dramatic function of music in biblical plays is "to symbolize heaven" (82). He recalls that in the Middle Ages, the Boethian concept of music was standard in its tripartite division, *musica mundana*, *musica humana* and *musica instrumentalis*,[293] and that angels stand for "a higher harmony, a more complete 'order' than that known on earth. Music is a mirror or speculum (to use a favourite medieval image) of the God-created universe" ("Music in Medieval Drama" 82).[294] However, Huck states that "The singing of the angels can be considered as the paradigm of the concept of music in the Middle Ages" (99). In his study, he claims that the idea of singing angels in medieval works is in fact an original Christian contribution to the current notion of music. Thus, as opposed to the aforementioned subdivision of music summarised by Boethius, Huck recalls that in 1415 Nicolaus de Capua connected the angelic songs to the classical categories of music and substituted the term *musica mundana* for *musica angelica*. Consequently, Capua replaced the

[293] According to Boethius (ca. 480–ca. 525) in *De Institutione Musica*, the universe was divinely created and, as in the case of the consonant musical intervals, was founded on simple mathematical proportions. Due to its mathematical and acoustic properties, music became a mirror or speculum for divine order (Boecio 76-84).

[294] Stevens explains those musical items which were not governed by Boethian cosmology in terms of realism ("Music in Medieval Drama" 82). However, Richard Rastall completely disagrees with this 'realistic' view since there are certain elements in the plays which are not realistic in a modern sense (Rastall, "Alle Hefne Makyth Melody" 1-12). See also Richard Rastall. "Music in the Cycle Plays." Ed. Marianne G. Briscoe and John C. Coldewey. *Contexts for Early English Drama*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989. 192–218; and Richard Rastall. *Minstrels Playing: Music in Early English Religious Drama*. Cambridge: DS Brewer, 1996.

Greek theory of universal harmony with the Christian notion of angelic choirs (99-119).

The shepherds in the plays, as soon as they can comprehend the nature of the message, are turned into more spiritual characters and, perhaps because their body and soul are more harmoniously related, are able to listen to angelic music and imitate their harmony in most cases. The first glimpse of this new attitude is actually seen in the characters' description of angelic music. In this sense, Rastall argues that music functions on a symbolic level, revealing a character's "in-tuneness with God's Will" ("Music in the Cycle Plays" 193).[295] For example, in *The York Chandlers' Play*, the angel's song is described as a "noble noyse" (l. 71), while in Fray Íñigo's *Coplas de "Vita Christi"* the winged messenger is said to sing "con çelestial dulçedumbre (*copla* 136, l. 5)" (with heavenly sweetness). Likewise, in *The Coventry Shearmen and Taylors' Pageant*, Pastor III summons the other herdsmen so that they may "here there armony" (l. 253). Pastor I is also impressed by "the swettness of þer songe" (l. 255). Similarly, In *The Towneley First Shepherds' Play*, it is the heavenly music that finally convinces the shepherds that they have seen an angel:

> I wold that we knew
> Of this song so fre
> Of the angell;
> I hard by hys steuen
> He was send downe fro heuen (ll. 588–92).

[295] On the role of angelic music in the English plays, see also Rastall, "Alle Hefne Makyth Melody" 195.

A similar reaction is found in *The Towneley Second Shepherds' Play*, in which Primus Pastor describes the angelic music as "a meruell" (l. 935).

The joy at the news that the Savior is born matches the joy expressed in liturgical texts as well. As discussed above, a text from Isaiah 24:7-16 found in the Breviary as the third *Lectio* for the Friday of the second week in Advent links the Advent fast and the restrictions on the practice of music which seems to correspond to the lack of music or its negative connotations in those plays which recreate a pastoral rural world before the Annunciation to the shepherds. However, the same *Lectio* also highlights that only those who follow these instructions will be able to glorify the Lord at his coming. The text also specifies that they will express their joy by singing: "Hi levabunt vocem suam, atque laudabunt: cum glorificatus fuerit Dominus, hinnient de mari (Isaiah 24: 14; *Breviarium Romanum* 150)" (These shall lift up their voice, and shall give praise: when the Lord shall be glorified, they shall make a joyful noise from the sea). This idea is repeated again on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, during the second Lesson at Matins, which comes from Isaiah 35: 7-10; in this text, Isaiah highlights the new mood in the redeemed when their Lord arrives:

> [. . .] Et redempti a Domino convertentur, et venient in Sion cum laude, et laetitia sempiterna super caput eorum: gaudium et laetitiam obtinebunt, et fugiet dolor et gemitus (*Breviarium Romanum* 166).
>
> TRANS.: [. . .] And the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and shall come into Sion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Nevertheless, it is in the Christmas Masses celebrated on December 24 and December 25[296] that the Church lays emphasis on the joy of the faithful. As mentioned above, the images found in the liturgical texts insist on the idea that light has overcome darkness and that such earthly light anticipates joy in heaven. Thus, the Introit to the Vigil Mass on December 24 dwells on the idea that Christ's glory will be seen in the morning (Exodus 16: 6-7).[297] As in the liturgy of Advent, the service highlights the idea of Christ's double coming, first in his role as Savior then as Judge.[298] As the Collect reflects, that dual event is to be celebrated exultantly with great joy:

> Deus, qui nos redemptionis nostrae annua expectatione laetificas: praesta, ut Unigenitum tuum, quem Redemptorem laeti suscipimus, venientem quoque iudicem securi videamus, Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum Filium tiim, Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti, Deus, per omnia saecula saeculorum (*Missale Romanum* 17).
>
> TRANS.: O God, Who dost gladden us by the yearly expectation of our redemption, grant that we, who now joyfully receive Thine only-begotten Son as our Redeemer, may also without fear behold Him coming as our Judge, even the same Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Hold Ghost.

In the solemnity if the Midnight Mass, after the Old Testament is read, the *Gloria* is intoned, and it usually entails a choir singing it polyphonically. Traditionally, during the *Gloria* the church's bells as well as

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[296] See Appendix I.

[297] The same passage is repeated again in the Gradual.

[298] This is precisely the understanding of the nature of the Nativity which Joseph will express in the *York* pageant when he returns to the stable to greet the baby: "Hail royal king, root of all right, Hail savior" (ll. 109-110).

the altar bells are rung all through the entire hymn for the first time in the Liturgical Year. As a matter of fact, bells are not used during the season of Advent due to the aforementioned restrictions on musical instruments.

The Gospel reading at the Midnight Mass is Luke 2:1-8, which recounts the story of the Nativity proper[299] and also of the Annunciation to the Shepherds which is the basis and fundamental scriptural text upon which these play texts are constructed. During this service, however, only Luke 2:8-14 is covered, that is, when the angel tells the shepherds to be jubilant: "[. . .] nolite timere ecce enim evangelizo vobis gaudium magnum quod erit omni populo (Luke 2:10)" ([...] fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people)." The angel is then joined in by more celestial creatures who praise God: "[. . .] et subito facta est cum angelo multitudo militiae caelestis laudantium Deum et dicentium gloria in altissimis Deo et in terra pax in hominibus bonae voluntatis; Luke 8:13-14" (And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will).

The third Mass starts with the proclamation of Christ's Birth, and special emphasis is placed on singing and renovation: "Cantate Domino canticum novum: quia mirabilia fecit; *Missale Romanum* 25 (Psalms 97: 1)" (Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle: because He hath done wonder-

[299] Mary and Joseph travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem to partake in a census, and Jesus is born in the Manger.

ful things). The Gradual reinforces the idea that music is the appropriate means to express people's joy, and invites all gentiles to worship God:

> Viderunt omnes fines terrae salutare Dei nostri: jubilate Deo, omnes terra.
> V.[300] Notum fecit Dominus salutare suum: ante conspectum gentium revelavit justitiam suam. Alleluia, alleluia.
> V. Dies sanctificatus illuxit nobis: venite gentes, et adorate Dominum: quia hodie descendit lux magna super terram (Psalm 97:3-4; *Missale Romanum* 25-26).
>
> TRANS.:
> All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God: sing joyfully to God, all the earth.
> V. The Lord hath made known His salvation: He hath revealed His justice in the sight of the gentiles. Alleluia, alleluia.
> V. A sanctified day has shone upon us: come ye Gentiles and adore the Lord: for this day a great light hath descended upon the earth. Alleluia.

Therefore, after the appearance of the angels—in those plays in which they feature—or more generally, after the news about Christ's Birth is undisclosed and internalized by the herdsmen, the heretofore mute shepherds tend to sing as a reflection of their new joyful nature. Little is known, however, about the singers/actors that actually performed in these plays. Most critics agree on the fact that if the *Gloria* was indeed sung, a skilled church singer capable of reading musical notation would have been required (Davidson *The York Corpus Christi Plays*).

In addition, the technical precision concerning music displayed by the shepherds in some plays clearly indicates that the authors were skilled musicians. At the same time, accomplished singers are likely to have been

[300] V[ersus].

hired as well, in view of the kind of songs that are performed. English scholars have often pointed out the sophisticated approach to music in *The Towneley Second Shepherds' Play*, which is quite exceptional, particularly if the following assignation of parts is taken into account:[301]

> PRIMUS PASTOR
> Lett me sing the tenory.
>
> SECUNDUS PASTOR
> And I the tryble so hye.
>
> TERCIUS PASTOR
> Then the meyne fallys to me.
> Lett se how ye chauntt (ll. 270–73).[302]

Stevens and Cawley, following Traver[303] identify this assignation of parts as a three-part descant (vol. 2: 499-500). According to the *OED*, a discant was "A melodious accompaniment to a simple musical theme (*the plain-song*), sung or played, and often merely extemporized, above it, and thus forming an air to its bass: the earliest form of counterpoint" ("Descant"). This is not the only example of the shepherds' musical expertise in the play, for they are able to describe the sophisticated nature of the angel's song in precise technical terms:

> Say, what was his song?
> Hard ye not how he crakyd it,

[301] For further reading on music in *The Second Shepherds' Play* see JoAnna Dutka. *Music in the English Mystery Plays*. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1980. 110–12; see also Rastall, *Minstrels Playing* 137-178. For a classic study on music in the play, see Nan Cooke Carpenter. "Music in the Secunda Pastorum." *Speculum* 26. 4 (1951): 696–700.

[302] In a polyphonic composition, the "tenory" is lowest voice, "tryble" the highest, and the "meyne" is the middle part. See Dutka 99, 104.

[303] Hope Traver. "The Relation of Musical Terms in the Woodkirk Shepherds Plays to the Dates of their Composition." *Modern Language Notes* 20.1 (1905): 1-5.

> Thre brefes to a long?[304]
> Yee, Mary, he hakt it:
> Was no crochett wrong,
> Nor nothyng that lakt it (ll. 946–51)

Stevens and Cawley come to the conclusion that the performers who acted those shepherds were probably accomplished singers (vol. 2: 496).[305] However, no music for this play has been preserved, and the extant text does not include any songs to be performed by the herdsmen. This assignment of parts actually takes place before the coming of the angels, and therefore, if it is assumed that the prescriptions of Advent were taken into account in the composition of the play, it would make sense that no songs were performed before the announcement of the Birth. Nonetheless, there is no further reference to singing after the annunciation to the shepherds, or later, as the play closes, although it could be conjectured that some kind of polyphony was accomplished, as it is the case in other pieces in which similar arrangements feature. In this respect, Carpenter argues that such dwelling on musical terminology on the part of the shepherds serves to link the farcical and the nativity sections, since by describing the technicalities of music they seem to anticipate the sophistication of angels (697).

Polyphony is also hinted at in *The York Chandlers' Play* [306] when the First Shepherd claims that he can imitate the angelic song "alls wele as hee" (l. 60) and asks the others to help him out: "Yf3e will helpe, late see

[304] A "brefe" (breve) has one half or one third the time value of a long; See Dutka *Music in the English Mystery Plays* 95–101.

[305] For a discussion of professional and amateur performers in the English plays, see Rastall, *The Heaven Singing* 300-368.

[306] On the possibility of a polyphonic performance in *York* see Davidson, *The York Corpus Christi Plays* fn to ll. 5 and ff.

halde on | For þus it was" (l. 64). As explained above, there is a missing leaf in the original *York* pageant which presumably included the singing of the *Gloria*. In this case, a liturgical chant from the York service books would have been used in all likelihood.[307] The first shepherd, when boasting that he can imitate "itt alls wele as hee" (l. 60), is surely exaggerating his ability, though when joined by the others (as appears to be the case, and if so he must have been a lead singer) he is able, with their help, to command "a mery note" (l. 65). The actual song is not preserved, and the stage direction at l. 64 only indicates that they actually sing: "Et tunc cantant."

It is worth noting that a more complex assignation of parts, comparable to the one in *Towneley*, may be found in Gréban's work, at the moment when the devils meet in order to arrange their temptations on earth:

> ASTAROTH
> Vous orrez belle chanterie
> tantost et ung motet d'onneur:
> Sathan, tu feras la teneur
> et j'asseray la contre sus;
> Belzebuth dira le dessus
> avec Berich a haulte double
> et Cerberus fera un trouble
> continué, Dieu seet comment (ll. 3834-41).
>
> TRANS.:
> ASTAROTH
> You will soon hear a beautiful singing,
> And a motet of honor.
> Satan, you do the tenor,
> And I will try the contratenor bassus;

[307] On the liturgical manuscripts from York see Pamela King, *The York Mystery Cycle* 217-27.

> Beelzebub will voice the higher part
> With Berich singing a "haulte double,"
> And Cerverus will keep up a continuous treble,
> God knows how.

The Spanish shepherds' plays also include some complex polyphonic performances on the part of the shepherds. An arrangement of parts, not unlike that of the English piece, may be found in López de Yanguas's *Égloga de la Natividad*. The references to musical notation are somewhat similar and, in fact, the shepherds have also a substantial conversation on their musical talents and display a good command of the jargon (ll. 448-79). First, the four shepherds challenge each other on their musical knowledge. Mingo asks Gil if he knows anything about music (l. 448), and an offended Gil responds "¡Tomá qué pregunta! Sé todos los puntos | del sol, fa, mi, re, que habrás maravilla" (What a question! I know all the dotted notes[308] | Of sol, fa, mi, re marvelously). In addition, Pero, another shepherd, states that "Sé todos los tonos con su subidilla (l. 455)" (I know all the tones with their corresponding ascending scales). Benito's speech is actually full of technicalities:

[308] The shepherd seems to be indicating that he even knows the dotted notes. A point after a note or rest in music indicates augmentation of the time value by one half. See "Dot."

Yo, par diez, que cante diapente y mudança
y al canto de guérfano yo le saguda
octavas, novenas, con voz bien aguda,
¡por alto los pies, que habrás gasajado! (l. 458-61)

TRANS.:
I, for God's sake, my song (will be) a diapente[309] and a mudanza[310]
And to the orphan chant[311] I will add
Octaves,[312] ninths,[313] with a rather high-pitched voice
My voice will go over each verse, you will enjoy it!

His command of music continues and he explains in ll. 461-62 that he will even pay attention in his interpretation to "breves" (breves) and "longa" (long), a terminology that was also mentioned by the *Towneley* shepherds. In addition, the assignation of parts carried out by Mingo somehow resembles that of *The Second Shepherds' Play*:

[...] comience la música con dulce primor.
Y lleva, Gil Pata, si quies, el tenor;
tú frísale al tripe, Benito, las martas;
tú di, Pero Pança, requintas[314] y cuartas,
que yo diré luego la cuentra y mayor.

TRANS.:
[...] let the music begin with skillful sweetness.
And, you Gil Pata, may be the tenor;

[309] "In ancient and mediæval Music: The consonance or interval of a fifth." ("Diapente").
[310] "The first part of the strophe in the Spanish musical form of villancico. This has a melody that is changed from the earlier refrain." ("Mudanza").
[311] It is not clear what is meant by this type of chant. González Ollé suggests that it could refer to a particular instrument or to the songs performed by orphan choir boys belonging to an institution. The fact that the shepherds will sing with a high-pitched voice seems to point to this interpretation, as the voices of children would also be high-pictched. See Fernán López de Yanguas. *Obras Dramáticas*. Ed. Fernando González Ollé. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1967. 27 fn to l. 459.
[312] "An interval of seven notes of the diatonic scale." ("Octave").
[313] "An interval embracing nine consecutive notes in the diatonic scale. Also: a note a ninth above or below another note." ("Ninth").
[314] According to the *DRAE*, "requintar" means to lower or to increase a given tone or chord five points. ("Requintar").

> You, go for the treble, Benito.[315]
> You may sing, Pero Pança, five of four tones higher
> And I shall sing later the bass.[316]

Likewise, in Enzina's *Égloga Respresentada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad* the characters also envisage singing different parts poliphonically: "y dos a dos cantiquemos | porque vamos ensayados (ll. 179–80)" (Let us sing in pairs | so that we rehearse as we go along). After that, the shepherds sing a *villancico*[317] in the vernacular—i.e., *Sayagués*— which brings the play to its conclusion. In their song, the shepherds express their joy and summarize the particulars of Christ's Birth (ll. 181-260).[318]

In *The Towneley Second Shepherds' Play* the assignation of parts has been described as a descant. Similarly, the Spanish shepherds sing "en canto de órgano," that is, in organum, which is also a polyphonic performance. Yanguas's arrangement is a clear example, although in Lucas Fernández's works the technique is announced from the start. Thus, in the introduction to his *Égloga o Farsa*, the author lets the reader know that "[…] finalmente se van todos a le adorar cantando el villancico que en fin es escrito, en canto de órgano" ([...] finally, they all leave in order to worship

[315] The meaning of the phrase "frisar las martas" is unclear in this context. For a discussion of posible meanings see Fernán López de Yanguas, *Obras Dramáticas* 28-29 fn to l. 477.

[316] According to Máximo Trapero "cuenta y mayor" refers to the bass in this polyphonic assignation of parts which would be in fact an organum or descant (431-32).

[317] The *OED* actually includes an interesting quotation of an early-19th-c English traveler who describes *villancico* as follows: "The music … was … used in a species of dramatic interludes in the vulgar tongue, which were sung, not acted, at certain intervals of the service. These pieces had the name of villancicos, from villano, a clown, shepherds and shepherdesses being the interlocutors in these pastorals." ("Villancico").

[318] The musical notation of Enzina's play has not been preserved.

Him, singing the *villancico* in organum). The *OED* defines "organum" as follows:

> [...] the practice of polyphony, both improvised and written, in two, three, four, or five parts, and usually decorating an existing plainchant or other melody. Also: a single polyphonic part added to a melody [. . .]. Originally written in fourths or fifths (chiefly or wholly in parallel movement), but later used of more elaborate styles. In its earliest form, also called diaphony, and both contrasted with and held to be the same as discant. ("Organum").

Similarly in Fernández's *Auto o Farsa* the reader is informed at the beginning that the shepherds will perform a final *villancico* in organum, which will also include a dance: "[. . .] Juan los lieua Bethlén a adorar al señor cantando y vaylando el villancico en fin escripto en canto de órgano" (Juan leads them to Bethlehem to worship the Lord singing and dancing the final villancico written in organum).

The shepherds therefore become harmonious beings in the course of the plays and so they end up imitating the angels. Nevertheless those shepherds, as hinted above, never sing the *Gloria*, even if they are able to sing various other solemn religious songs or chants in Latin. Unlike the angels, the Spanish and English shepherds also sing popular songs in the vernacular, whether in the shape of a Castilian *villancico* or in that of an English folk song such as "Ase I Owt Rodde" in *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* (stage direction at l. 263).[319] The shepherds in *The Chester*

[319] In Vicente's *Auto Pastoril Castelhano*, Gil, one of the shepherds, sings a folk, comic song that the character himself describes as a *chançoneta* (ll. 23-24), which, according to the *DRAE* was a light and festive verse song or composition meant to be sung doing Christmas and other religious festivities. ("Chanzoneta").

Painters' Playe also sing popular music, for as soon as they manage to decode the angel's message they become imbued with a strong sense of musicality and express their determination to sing before they set off for Bethlehem. Primus Pastor is the first to express his will to worship Jesus and to sing before the journey: "Nowe pray wee to him with good intent, | and singe I wyll and me [unbrace]" (ll. 436-37). The other shepherds also show their determination to join in and Garcius takes the lead, a fact that may imply polyphonic singing:

> SECUNDUS PASTOR
> Nowe syth I have all my will,
> never in this world soe well I was.
> Singe wee nowe, I rede us, shryll
> a mery songe us to solace.
>
> GARCIUS
> Singe we nowe; lett see,
> some songe will I assaye.
> All men nowe singes after mee,
> for musicke of mee learne yee maye.

The stage direction specifies the actual song they sing,[320] which is of popular origin: "Tunc cantabunt et postea dicat Tertius Pastor (Here singe 'troly, loly, loly, loo')" (stage direction at l. 447). Their musicality continues along and after their journey as Garcius's words indicate: "Nowe wend we forth to Bethem, | that is best our songe to bee" (ll. 448-49). On their way, the angel appears and gives them some details about Christ's Birth. Garcius, again, insists that they will sing as they walk: "To Bethlem take wee the waye [. . .] |And sing we all, I read" (ll. 472, 476).

[320] For an analysis of the non-religious songs contained in the English biblical plays, see Dutka *Music in the English Mystery Plays* 65–81.

Similarly, the *York* shepherds set off with a song, as Secundus Pastor explains: "And make myrthe and melody, | With sange to seke our sayour" (ll. 84-85), which a stage direction at l. 85 confirms: "Et tunc cantant." A similar situation occurs in *N-Town*, when the shepherds head off to worship the baby, to whom they offer their songs and their love for, as explained above, it is all they have: "Lete us go forthe fast on hye, | And honowre þat babe wurthylye, | With merthe, songe, and melodye (ll. 86-88). The characters sing along on their trip to the stable although, as opposed to other plays in which they perform folk songs in the vernacular, here a Marian hymn in Latin is chosen. A stage direction after l. 89 explains "Tunc pastores cantabunt 'Stelle celi extirpauit'[sic], quo facto ibunt ad querendum Christum" (The Shepherds will sing "Stella Celi Extirpauit" and in doing so will go looking for Christ). The actual words are not provided, and according to Granger (94) and Rastall (*The Heaven Singing* 353), this hymn was not part of the official liturgy in England, and it may be assumed that most spectators would not have been acquainted with it or with its actual meaning.

The choice of the song "Stella caeli" allows several readings. First, it matches the general tone of the play and makes it possible for the shepherds to identify with the clergy, as they have achieved a new role as spiritual pastors. This is actually reinforced by their knowledge and command of Latin. The hymn compares the Virgin to a star, and asks that this celestial body have mercy on people:

Stella caeli exstirpavit
Quae lactavit Dominum
Mortis pestem quam plantavit
Primus parens hominum.
Ipsa Stella nunc dignetur
Sidera compescere,
Quorum bella plebem caedunt
Dirae mortis ulcere.
O gloriosa Stella Maris
A peste succurre nobis;
Audi nos, nam te Filius
Nihil negans honorat
Salva nos Jesu pro quibus
Pro quibus virgo mater te orat.[321]

TRANS.:
A Star of heaven,
She who suckled the Lord,
Rooted out the deadly plague
Which mankind's first father planted.
May this Star now be gracious
And restrain the heavens,
Whose attacks bring our people low
With fierce and deadly wounds.
O glorious Star of the Sea,
Come to save us from this plague:
Hear us, for your Son in respect
Will never deny your prayer.
Save us Jesus, for whom
Your Virgin mother pleads to you!

The singing of this hymn may have been relevant at the time of the play's performance, since it had then apparently been sung as a prayer to ask for protection against the plague.[322] In fact, several records show that there

[321] Text quoted in Rosemary Woolf. *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968. 282.

[322] For an analysis of musical and textual features, and the contexts of performance of the hymn, see Christopher Macklin. "Plague, Performance and the Elusive History of the Stella Celi Extirpavit." *Early Music History* 29 (2010): 1-31.

might have been an epidemic in Norfolk when *The N-Town Play* was composed.[323] In any case, as Granger argues, the fact that liturgical music "is performed by characters in the play emphasizes the bringing of liturgy into the drama on a domestic scale, to balance the celestial scale presented by the angels" (93). In addition, the shepherds' ability to recite or sing liturgical texts is akin to other medieval plays in which Latin enjoys a significant dramatic function[324] and tended to be employed, for instance, in the speeches (or songs)[325] of holy and virtuous characters to signify their agreement with the official doctrine of the Church (Ridruejo and Portillo 153–58).[326]

This is clear for instance in Lucas Fernández's plays, which combine liturgical Latin texts and chants, and a final *villancico* mostly written in the shepherds' rustic language (*Sayagués*), although it includes some Latin strophes as well. Thus, in *Égloga o Farsa* the aforementioned agreement with the official doctrine of the Church makes the shepherds change drastically, even to the point of making them recite a part of the Creed

[323] See Granger 94, and Gail M. Gibson. "Bury St Edmunds, Lydgate, and the N-Town Cycle." *Speculum* 56 (1981): 56-90.

[324] On the switching of languages in biblical plays see, Gabriella Mazzon. *Interactive Dialogue Sequences in Middle English Drama*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2009. 183-92.

[325] As explained above, the characters of *The Towneley First Shepherds' Play* manage Virgil's Fourth Eclogue (ll. 556–59).

[326] Mayte Ridruejo and Rafael Portillo. "La Traducción del Latín al Inglés en los 'pageants' del Ludus Coventriae." *Translation Across Cultures: La Traducción entre el Mundo Hispánico y Anglosajón: Relaciones Lingüísticas, Culturales y Literarias. Actas XI Congreso AEDEAN 1989*. Ed. J. C. Santoyo. León: Universidad de León, Secretariado de Publicaciones, 1989. 153–58.

in Latin.[327] Gil seems to be testing his mates' actual understanding of the Mystery of the Incarnation:

> Quiero's yo'ra pespuntar
> vna nota:
> ¿A qué quijo Dios baxar
> a aqueste mundo a encarnar?
> Desto no sabréys vos jota (ll. 456-60)
> Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram
> salutem descendit de celis et incarnatus est
> de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine.[328]
>
> TRANS.:
> I wish to note something:
> Why would God want to
> Come down to this world to be incarnated?
> You obviously know nothing about this.
> For us and for our salvation
> He came down from heaven
> And by the power of the Holy Spirit
> He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary.

The fact that the author makes his character quote from the Creed, which is the one normally recited in the Mass, shows to what extent the rustics have changed and have been transformed into spiritual pastors and, therefore, into transmitters of the faith. On the other hand, they still retain their use of *Sayagués* speech, but that may be just a reminder of their old gentile nature. In addition, their acquisition of the Church's language

[327] In Vicente's *Auto Pastoril Castelhano*, Gil paraphrases the Song of Songs and addresses the Virgin Mary with such compliments as "columba mea fermosa" ('my fair dove'; l. 348), or "tota pulchra amica mea" ('[Thou art] all fair, O my love'; l. 360). His fellow shepherds are astonished by his sudden sophistication, thus prompting Silvestre to remark: Con esso hablas llatin | tan a punto que es plazer ('Moreover, you speak Latin | So accurately that it is a delight'; ll. 366–67).

[328] In the 1514 text it is not clear who recites the Latin lines of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed. The modern editor does not clarify it either. The words are placed after Gil's speech and before their polyphonic singing that is explained below.

places them in a position of God's chosen as the first witness of the Birth and as the first spokesmen of the message of salvation. Not only that, this scene is a perfect example of the way in which liturgy is brought into the drama on a domestic scale. First, a stage direction at l. 460 indicates that at this point the shepherds kneel down: "Aquí se han de fincar de rodillas todos quatro y cantar en canto de órgano" (Here the four of them are to kneel down and will sing in organum). As a matter of fact, genuflection or kneeling is prescribed when the recitation of the Creed, which would have been recited at Christmas, reaches precisely this point, that is, the reference to Christ's Incarnation ("et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est").

In the Tridentine Mass, the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* indicates that a genuflection is needed any time the Creed is recited. The faithful must also kneel at other specific moments, namely, at the words "et verbum caro factum est" (and the word became flesh) from the prologue of the Gospel of John (1:1-14) which is normally the Last Gospel in the Tridentine Mass and the Gospel for the third Mass on Christmas Day. In fact, the aforementioned stage direction at l. 460 indicates that what shepherds are to sing as they kneel down is the continuation of the Creed: "Et homo factum est; et homo factum est; et homo factum est" (And was made man). The Latin is corrupted, though, since the play text has "*factum est*" instead of "*factus est*.[329]"

[329] "Et incarnatus est de spiritu sancto ex Maria virgine: *et homo factus est*" is the actual verse in the Creed.

Yet this is not the only example of liturgical material in the play. *Égloga o Farsa* actually provides what seems to be a reinterpretation in Latin of the so-called "O Antiphons" which are seven antiphons chanted[330] before the Magnificat at Vespers during the Liturgy of the Hours on the seven days preceding the Christmas Vigil. The assumption is that the actor playing Macario, provided that he may later sing in organum with the rest of shepherds, should intone these verses of praise.[331] All the original antiphons begin with the exclamation "O" followed by a plea for the Messiah to come, a cry that becomes more urgent as Christmas approaches.[332] Thus, Macario recites a series of verses in praise of Baby Jesus which recalls those sets of antiphons:

> ¡O altitudo diuiciarum
> sciencie et sapiencie Dei!
> ¡O delicie deliciarum!
> ¡O sciencie immense scienciarum! (ll. 571-74).
>
> TRANS.:
> O depth of riches
> both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

[330] During the Middle Ages, while the monastic choirs sang the antiphons, the great bells of the church were rung. See Saunders.

[331] Although apart from the textual evidence little is known about the mise-en-scène of Fernández plays, it supports the idea that this para-liturgical material and, in general, the play as a whole must have been highly musical, for that must have been one of the main reasons Fernández was hired by the Duke of Alba. John Lihani, ed. *Lucas Fernández*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1973. 21.

[332] Each antiphon highlights a title for the Messiah: *O Sapientia* (O Wisdom), *O Adonai* (O Lord), *O Radix Jesse* (O Root of Jesse), *O Clavis David* (O Key of David), *O Oriens* (O Rising Sun), *O Rex Gentium* (O King of the Nations), and *O Emmanuel* (Hebrew for "God is with us"). They were probably composed in the seventh or eighth century when monks put together texts from the Old Testament which looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. They became very popular in the Middle Ages. Additionally, each one refers to the prophecy of Isaiah on the coming of the Messiah (Saunders).

O delight of delights!
O great knowledge of the sciences!

The first two lines are taken from Romans 33:11;[333] the Latin, however, as in the rest of those verses, is corrupted, and the author has reversed the order of the last two words.[334] Nonetheless, the expression "sciencie et sapiencie Dei" actually echoes more faithfully one of the original antiphons, namely, "O Sapientia," that is, "O Wisdom."

In the majority of cases, as hinted above, music brings the plays to their conclusion. In some cases, such as in *The Second Shepherds' Play*, the actual song has not been preserved, but in all likelihood, given the complex assignation of parts explained above, it must have entailed polyphony. In any case, from the text it may be ascertained that the shepherds' intention as they say farewell to the Holy Family is to sing before parting:

PRIMUS PASTOR
Fare well, lady,
So fare to beholde,
With thy childe on thi kne.

SECUNDUS PASTOR
Bot he lygys full cold.
Lord, well is me!
Now we go, thou behold.

TERTIUS PASTOR
Forsothe, allredy
It semys to be told
Full oft.

[333] Romans 33:11 appears in connection with the Office of the Holy Trinity in the *Liber Memorandum Ecclesie de Bernewelle* from the Priories of St Giles and St Andrews in Barnwell, England compiled ca. 1296. See John Willis Clark. *Liber Memorandum Ecclesie de Bernewelle*. Ed. John Willis Clark. Cambridge: CUP, 1907. 16-7.

[334] The *Vulgate* actually has "o altitudo divitiarum sapientiae et scientiae Dei."

PRIMUS PASTOR
What grace we haue fun!

SECUNDUS PASTOR
Com furth; now ar we won!

TERTIUS PASTOR
To syng ar we bun
Let take on loft!
Explicit Pagina Pastorum (ll. 1076-88).

Similarly, in *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*, a stage direction indicates that the rustics sing before they leave the stage: "There the scheppardis syngith ageyne[335] and goth forthe of þe place" (stage direction at l. 312). In *N-Town*, the assumption is that they sing in front of the Holy Family, for Mary explicity thanks them for their songs:

Now, 3e herdmen, wel mote 3e be.
For 3oure omage and 3ourd syngynge,
My sone xal aqwyte 3ow in hefne se
And 3eue 3ow all ryght good hendynge (ll. 151-54).

Likewise, the *Chester* shepherds sing before leaving the stable as Tertius Pastor's words specify: "Amen, all singe you; |good men, farewell yee" (ll. 691-92).

The *Officium Pastorum* in *The Shrewsbury Fragments* includes some passages in Latin directly quoted from Luke. These verses were accompanied by music and the notation has been preserved.[336] The first quote

[335] As mentioned above, the shepherds sing first "Ase I Owt Rodde." Their final song must have been a similar popular composition.

[336] See Frank LL. Harrison "Appendix: Notes on the Music in the Shrewsbury Liturgical Plays." *The Shrewsbury Fragments*. Ed. Norman David. London: EETS (OUP), 1970. 125-26.

from the Gospel is sung before they actually start their trip to the Manger as Pastor III clarifies:

> 3one brightness wil vs bring
> Vnto þat blissful boure;
> For solace schal we syng
> To seke oure Saueour (29-32)
> Transeamus usque Bethleem et uideamus hoc verbum quod factum est quod fecit Dominus et ostendit nobis.[337]

According to Harrison, the music in this stanza is akin to the plainsong[338] for the same words from the Cathedral of Rouen, France. This scholar sustains that the first three words from Luke are "sung in free rhythm by the shepherd whose part this is. All three shepherds then sing the reminder" (125). Thus, as in the case of other English or Spanish plays, the *Shrewsbury* shepherds also sing polyphonically, and not only once, for they sing the following verses before their last speech in which they greet the Holy Family as they leave the stage: "Saluatorem, Christum Dominum, infantem pannis inuolutum, secundum sermonem angelicum" (after l. 38). These lines are quoted from the liturgical *Officium Pastorum* and are actually the answer to the question "Quem quaeritis in praesepe, pastores, dicite?"[339] The connection with Rouen plainsong, Harrison claims, is also

[337] From the *Vulgate* version of Luke 2:15.

[338] "Music developed for the unaccompanied unison singing of Christian liturgies, based on a system of modes and performed in free rhythm corresponding at least in part to the accentuation of the words, though often with considerable elaboration of the melody; the performance of such music." The plainsong is actually related to the descant or organum, which has been explained above with reference to some of the shepherds' performances. In fact, another definition of the term reads: "A simple or principal melody, as accompanied by a running melody or 'descant'." ("Plainsong").

[339] On the *Officium Pastorum* trope, see 3.1.

patent, although from the extant musical notation it cannot be inferred that both pieces were necessarily treated in the same manner (125).

As it has already been stated, the plays by Lucas Fernández and López the Yanguas end with polyphonic music. Both Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa* and *Auto o Farsa* include a "villancico en canto de órgano" (*villancico* in organum). In *Égloga o Farsa*, as explained above, the shepherds sing first "Et homo factum est" and then a *villancico* proper, which starts with the formula derived from the *Angelus*:

> Verbum caro factum est
> alleluya,
> et habitauit in nobis
> alleluya, alleluia (ll. 601-4)
>
> TRANS.:
> And the Word was made flesh
> Alleluia
> And dwelt among us
> Alleluia, alleluia.

The *Angelus*[340] is a prayer recited at three particular times during the day (morning, midday, and evening) which commemorates the Incarnation. It is practiced by reciting as versicle and response three biblical verses which describe Christ's Incarnation. The three verses are alternated with the Hail Mary prayer. In its origin, the *Angelus* needed to be recited kneeling[341] (which, as seen above, a stage direction, at l. 460 clearly indicates

[340] The term *Angelus* derived from its incipit in Latin: "Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariæ" (The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary). The angel alluded to in the prayer is Gabriel, who revealed to Mary that she would conceive the Son of God as told in Luke 1:26-38.

[341] Except on Sundays and on Saturday evenings, when the rubrics prescribe a standing posture ("Angelus").

for the singing of "Et homo factum est"), and also that it should be said at the sound of the bell ("Angelus"). The rest of the *villancico* (ll. 605-46), which is sung in *Sayagués*, shows simply the characters' joy and new spiritual state. It includes praises to Baby Jesus, to the Virgin Mary and it summarizes some of the central doctrinal issues treated in the play, such as the fulfillment of the prophecy or the defeat of evil and sin.

In *Auto or Farsa* there are two *villancicos*, both featuring at the end of the play, which are sung entirely in *Sayagués*.[342] These two pieces also praise Jesus and Mary and highlight some of the most relevant catechetical topics concerning the conception and Birth of Jesus. Unlike the one in *Égloga o Farsa*, dancing is also implied. Thus, as regards the first one (ll. 541-78), a stage direction points out at l. 540 that it is meant to be a "Villancico cantado y vaylado" (*villancico* involving singing and dancing). The second and last piece is devised to be performed as the shepherds leave the stage: "Villancico para se salir cantando y baylando" (villancico to go offstage while singing and dancing; stage direction at l. 585).

The nature of the *villancico* in López de Yanguas's play (ll. 480-502) is different and lies in sharp contrast with the highly religious content of the play. The musical piece included in *Égloga de la Natividad* is completely profane as it contains no references to the Nativity proper. In their song,

[342] At the end of the first villancico the text includes the word "fin" (the end), although there is an extra stanza inserted before the second song (ll. 579-85). Something similar occurs at the end of the second piece, as the word "fin" (after l. 623) appears again. An extra stanza is added before the play comes to its conclusion (ll. 624-30). There is no sufficient textual evidence, however, to figure out whether these lines were sung as part of the *villancicos* or simply recited.

the cheerful shepherds encourage each other to carry on singing, dancing and eating, a tone that matches the beginning of the play, which opens at the sound of bagpipes. However, the song ends by reminding one another of their duties as shepherds: "Demos ya fin a la dança, | tornemos al ganadillo (ll. 480-502)" (Let us end the dance | Let us go back to our herds). Given the role assigned to the character in this play, the fact that the shepherd mentions going back to their duties as shepherds is obviously ambivalent, and points to their new status as shepherds of souls who, as pastors, must continue their catechetical role.

Conclusion

The present study has tried for the first time to bring together all extant English and Spanish (Castilian) Nativity plays that deal with the Annunciation to and/or Adoration of the Shepherds. As has been demonstrated, such comparison is not only pertinent but useful, since it has shed new light upon a series of dramas that had so far been analyzed within their own national contexts, i.e., as being English or Castilian achievements, independent from the European literary, dramatic and theater traditions. For the purpose of this comparative analysis, seven English pieces, and seven Castilian dramas were analyzed. They all share a significant number of basic features: they deal with the Nativity and dramatize Luke's narrative account presented in 2:8-20, and their texts were all composed or written down within the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century. In addition, whenever necessary, a series of other European works such as Gil Vicente's Nativity plays, Gréban's *Le Mystère de la Passion*, Marguerite de Navarre's *Comédie de la Nativité de Jésus-Christ*, von Bingen's *Ordo Virtutum*, and the German *Erlauer Weihnachtsspiel* were also taken into account.

Since Luke's Nativity story is short and lacks any kind of details, a great challenge presented itself, namely, to find out the reasons behind the religious dramas in which shepherds feature as protagonists. Since there are no Apocrypha that dwell on the Nativity shepherds' episode, scholars

had often resorted to folklore and ancient English or Castilian traditions to explain their possible sources. This is the case of some critical works by Woolf, Stevens, Cawley, Lepow, and so forth, on the English side, and by Lihani, Stern, Pérez-Priego, Maurizi, etc., on the Castilian side, are evidence of this approach.

Although some scholars such as King, Twycross, Stern, Granger and so on, had already hinted that there might be some connections between the Christian liturgy and the dramatization of the biblical plays, the specific aspects of the liturgy that might have been the source for the shepherds' stories, dialogues, symbols and imagery in those pieces had not been fully studied so far. On the other hand, the traditional interpretation that used to link these dramas to the early medieval *Officium Pastorum* has progressively been discarded. As the present study has shown, only *The Shrewsbury Officium Pastorum* and Fray Íñigo's *Coplas de "Vita Christi"* still retain certain features that may be traced back to those liturgical tropes.

The results obtained by means of this liturgical approach are highly satisfactory, as the different chapters have tried to prove. The liturgical texts employed by the Church during the Advent season, both for the different masses and for the Divine Office services, proved to be useful tools that shed light on the speech and behavior of the shepherds in those plays which contain a first, longer part prior to the Annunciation of Christ's Birth. In this sense, the recurrent allusions to food and drink, and the fact that the shepherds share a meal in several of the plays, can be related to the

constant liturgical admonitions about the penance and fasting required as preparation for the coming of the Savior. The food and drink items described in some of the plays, for instance in the *Towneley* and *Chester* pieces, and Lucas Fernández's and Enzina's works, seem to insist on the fact that all characters eat their fill at a time when they should be fasting, even if scholars such as Lepow relate those items to Old Testament prohibitions. Since the shepherds pay little attention to such admonitions, they are later on unable to decode the signals received at the time of the Annunciation; that is particularly evident in the English *Towneley First* and *Second Shepherds' Plays*, *The Chester Painters' Playe*, *The Castilian Égloga o Farsa* by Lucas Fernández, and *Égloga Representada en la Mesma Noche de Navidad* by Enzina.

The many allusions to bad weather conditions found in the plays can certainly be related to the Advent liturgical texts that dwell on a negative natural environment as a result of mankind's sins. That is why shepherds continuously complain on the bitterly cold nights, their loss of sheep, the plagues and diseases affecting their flock and their own ill-health. Numerous echoes of Isaiah's prophetical texts may be traced in the shepherds' speeches, as this dissertation has tried to prove. A particularly interesting case is the allusion to the ten Plagues of Egypt in *Enzina's Égloga de las Grandes Lluvias*, and even more so in López de Yangua's *Égloga de la Natividad*, whose source is found in Isaiah 19:3, a reading set aside for Matins on the Second Thursday of Advent.

Since, following Luke's narrative, the first section in the shepherds' plays takes place at night, many allusions to darkness can be found, but they are later on set in sharp contrast with the light produced by heavenly phenomena. Here, again, echoes of the Advent and Christmas liturgical texts can be traced; for instance, most texts selected for the Canonical Hours and the masses insist on the contrast light/darkness which also becomes a significant motif in nearly all works analyzed.

The liturgical texts employed for the seasonal services also exert a significant influence on all the dramatic pieces studied, and not only on the ones that contain a first, introductory part. In all dramas that consist of two parts, the turning point is the announcement of the Birth, conveyed by celestial beings or by a human character. It is significant, however, that in those plays which insert the singing or recitation of the *Gloria*, the words do not quote the *Vulgate* version of Luke's 2:14, but the liturgical text included in the Ordinary of the Mass. The fact that the herdsmen are at first unable to grasp the meaning of the heavenly signals seem to be consistent with several Advent liturgical prescriptions about the need for a penitential preparation in order to fully understand the signs of redemption. Thus, characters fail to comprehend the words of the *Gloria*, for instance, in the *Towneley* and *Chester* pieces; also, the very nature of the angel in most Castilian plays, or even the significance of light and brightness in Fray Íñigo's and Lucas Fernández's works. Perhaps to remark the shepherds' still unredeemed nature, some of those characters interpret the

heavenly signs in the light of magic and witchcraft, as it becomes evident in Fray Íñigo's *Coplas* or in the *First* and *Second Shepherds' Plays* .

Once the shepherds are enlightened after being told about the Birth, one of the characteristic features that reveal their new spiritual state is that they are able to envisage the coming of Christ in the light of the Old Testament prophecies. A contemporary reader or spectator would find such prophetic announcements rather surprising, particularly because they are spoken by rustic characters. Once again, the shepherds rely on various prophetic statements taken from the liturgical texts employed by the Church for both Advent and Christmas. At the same time, this seems to be one of the few connections between the shepherds' plays and the old liturgical tropes, especially, the *Officium Pastorum* and the Pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo Contra Iudaeos, Paganos et Arianos*. Of all the English dramas, *The Towneley First Shepherds' Play* includes the most comprehensive account of messianic prophecies, thirteen in all. A particular case is that of *The Coventry Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*, which includes dialogues by two prophets who discuss the meaning of Christ's Birth. López de Yanguas's *Égloga de la Natividad* also lays special emphasis on prophecy and typology.

Another sign of the shepherds' new redeemed state is their ability to quote from Latin texts, as in The Second Shepherds' Play or in Fernández's pieces. By being able to recite Latin phrases they seem to suddenly identify with the clergy, thus becoming spiritual pastors of the faithful. Similarly, shepherds are now able to lecture on the Root of Jesse topic,

which involves drawing Christ's and Mary's genealogy. Thus, Fernández's *Auto o Farsa*, the English *First Shepherds' Play*, and *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* all include speeches on Jesus's ancestry. By contrast, the shepherds also dwell on their own humble family tree; such is the topic of several dialogues in, for instance, Fray Íñigo de Mendoza's *Coplas*, Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa* and *The Chester Painters' Playe*.

The Advent liturgical texts all insist on the need to give alms to the poor as part of the spiritual preparation for Christmas. Thus, the shepherds who feature in plays that contain a first introductory part are selfish enough to care only about themselves. It is only after they have assumed Christ's salvific message that they become aware of the need to share their own personal goods. That is no doubt the reason why as soon as they envisage worshiping Jesus at the stable, they decide to present Him with various gifts, some of which lend themselves to a symbolic interpretation; particularly in the case of lambs, birds or a ball. An exceptional case is that of Gómez Manrique's play in which Jesus is presented with symbols of His passion and death, thus bringing together Nativity, and Holy Week motifs.

Song and music, which seem to belong in most spectacular shows since the very origins of drama, play an important role in most of these pieces too. In plays that consist of two different parts, characters seem to be at first unable to sing or play instruments, no doubt in accordance with the Advent atmosphere and prescriptions found in the liturgical texts. Advent was in fact a mute, austere, plain season, in sharp contrast with

Christmastide, when music and ornamentation became essential. After Christ's Birth, the shepherds suddenly become involved in various kinds of musical performances and, apart from the *Gloria* Hymn which is recurrent in several plays, they also sing a section of the Mass Creed in Fernández's *Égloga o Farsa*, and the Latin hymn "Stella Caeli Extirpavit" in *The N-Town Play*. Various Christmas carols are also performed and, folk and popular songs are sung in *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* and *The Chester Painters' Playe*. Polyphony is also present in, for instance, López de Yanguas's *Égloga de la Natividad* and in *The Second Shepherds' Play*; in these two works, shepherds show a surprisingly accurate command of musical terminology.

The comparative study of all English and Castilian Nativity plays which include the Announcement of Christ's Birth to the shepherds has proved to be very useful, as it has revealed many striking similarities which cannot be deemed purely coincidental. Given the brevity of Luke's Gospel, all dramatists had to elaborate on the biblical narrative and, in order to do so, they seem to have drawn mainly on the liturgical texts for the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Since a comparative approach to all these dramas has proved to be fruitful and enlightening, it may be concluded that a similar procedure could be applied to medieval Nativity plays from France, Germany, and other countries. It should also be interesting to study any other literary works that include pastoral elements, especially those written in the second half of the 16th century, as that might reveal that the medieval Nativ-

ity shepherds' plays gave rise to a pattern which was later employed in the composition of non-religious works. That would be, however, the subject matter for another different dissertation.

Appendix I

The Advent and Christmas Liturgical Calendar

	Day	**Feast**
30		St Andrew
1	First Sunday in Advent	
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		St Nicholas
7		
8	Second Sunday in Advent	Feast of the Immaculate Conception
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		St Lucy
14		

	Day	**Feast**
15	Third Sunday in Advent (Rose Sunday)	
16		
17		
18	Ember Wednesday	
19		
20	Ember Friday	
21	Ember Saturday	St Thomas Apostle
22	Fourth Sunday in Advent	
23		
24		Vigil Mass
25		Midnight Mass
		Mass at Dawn
		Mass during the Day
26		St Stephen
27		
28		Holy Innocents' Day
29	Sunday within the Octave of Christmas	St Thomas Bishop

Appendix II

Parts of the Traditional Latin Tridentine Mass or Ordo Missæ[343]

PART 1: MASS OF THE CATECHUMENS

First Subdivision: Preparation from the Asperges to the Collect

1. Sprinkling of Holy Water (Asperges) [High Mass]
2. Sign of the Cross
3. The Psalm "Judica me" (Psalm 42)
4. Public Confession (Confiteor)
5. Priest at the Altar
6. The Introit (e.g. verses from a Psalm)
7. The Kyrie Eleison ("Lord Have Mercy")
8. The Gloria

Second Subdivision: Instruction from the Collect to the Creed

1. The Collect (prayer)
2. The Epistle (reading from an epistle of St. Paul)
3. The Gradual and Alleluia (verses from a Psalm)
4. Gospel Reading
5. The Sermon
6. The Nicene Creed

[343] Adapted from *Mycatholicsource.org.* See "Parts of the Traditional Latin 'Tridentine Mass."'

PART 2: MASS OF THE FAITHFUL

Third Subdivision: Offertory

1. The Offering of Bread and Wine
2. The Incensing of the Offerings and of the Faithful [High Mass]
3. Washing of the Hands (priest) (Lavabo - Psalm 25:6-12)
4. Prayer to the Holy Trinity
5. The Orate Fratres and Secret (silent prayer) with the Amen ratifying the Offertory

Fourth Subdivision: Consecration

1. The Preface to the Canon and Sanctus
2. The Canon or Rule of Consecration
3. Intercession (Reading of the Diptychs of the Living)
4. Prayers Preparatory to the Consecration
5. The Transubstantiation and Major Elevation
6. Oblation of the Victim [Christ] to God
7. Intercession (Reading of the Diptychs of the Dead)
8. End of the Canon and Minor Elevation, With the Amen Ratifying the Prayers of the Canon

Fifth Subdivision: Communion

1. The Lord's Prayer ("Pater Noster") & Libera Nos
2. Breaking of the Host
3. The Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

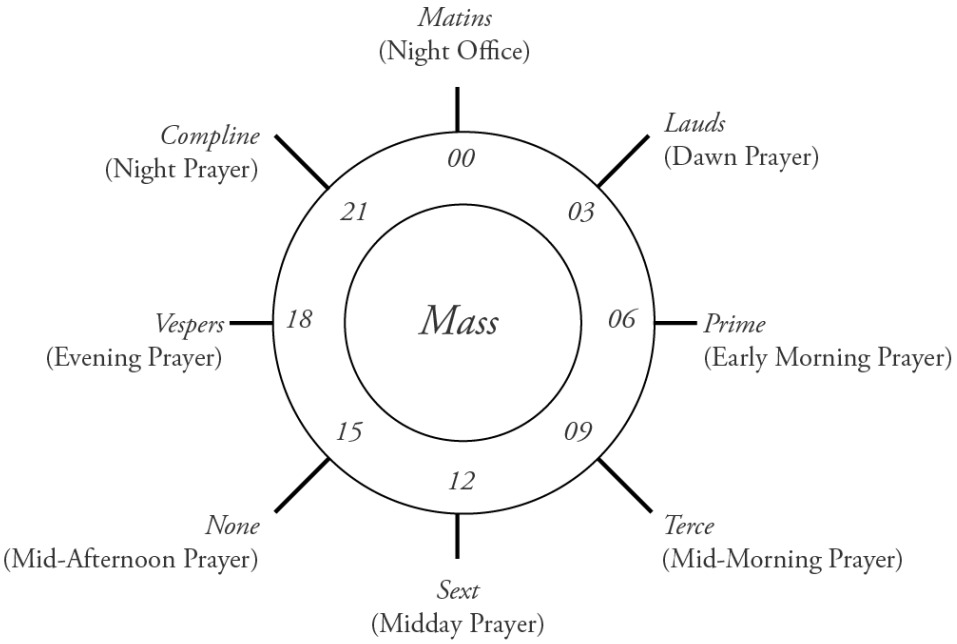
4. Prayers Preparatory to the Communion
5. Receiving of the Body and Blood of our Lord

Sixth Subdivision: Thanksgiving

1. Prayers During the Ablutions
2. The Communion Antiphon and Postcommunion
3. The Ite Missa Est and Blessing
4. The Last Gospel (Prologue to St. John's Gospel)
5. Prayers After Mass (led by the priest) [Low Mass] [Leonine Prayers]

Appendix III

The Divine Office



Liturgy of the Hours
Canonical Hours
Traditional Roman Breviary

Structure of a Canonical Hour

Matins, First Sunday in Advent

1. Invitatory
2. Hymn
3. First Nocturn
    - First Lesson (*Lectio*)
    - First Responsory
    - Second Lesson
    - Second Responsory
    - Third Lesson
    - Third Responsory
4. Second Nocturn
    - Fourth Lesson
    - Fourth Responsory
    - Fifth Lesson
    - Fifth Responsory
    - Sixth Lesson
    - Sixth Responsory
5. Third Nocturn
    - Seventh Lesson
    - Seventh Responsory
    - Eighth Lesson
    - Eighth Responsory
    - Ninth Lesson
    - Ninth Responsory

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